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LECTURES AND MISCELLANIES.

LECTURES

AND

MISCELLANIES.

BY

HENRY JAMES.

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ERRATA.

Page 70, Fifth line from bottom, erase the word "his."

Page 143, Sixth line from bottom, read *human* instead of *humane*.

Page 312, Third line from bottom, read *not*, instead of *cannot*.

Page 411, Eleventh line from bottom, read *ineffectually*, instead of *effectually*.

CONTENTS.

LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

PAGE

Democracy and its Issues, - - - - - - 1

LECTURE II.

Property as a Symbol, - - - - - - 53

LECTURE III.

The Principle of Universality in Art, - - - 102

LECTURE IV.

The Old and New Theology: Part I., - - 139

LECTURE V.

The Old and New Theology: Part II., - - - 195

LECTURE VI.

The Scientific Accord of Natural and Revealed Religion, - - - - - - - - - 247

MISCELLANIES.

PAGE

The Laws of Creation, - - - - - - - 317
Berkeley and his Critics, - - - - - - 333
God, - - - - - - - - - - 341
Man, - - - - - - - - - - 346
Responsibility, - - - - - - - - 357
Morality, - - - - - - - - - 362
A very long Letter, - - - - - - - 375
Spiritual Rappings, - - - - - - - 407
Intemperance, - - - - - - - - - 425
Christianity, - - - - - - - - 433

PREFACE.

The following *Lectures* were delivered in this city in the winter of 1850–51. They have been so considerably amplified in passing through the press, as scarcely to fall any longer within the customary lecture-limits. And yet it is easy to see that the subject of each Lecture is of so rich and various an interest, as to have been very inadequately treated after all.

The *Miscellanies* comprise some pieces that have been previously published in another form. Generally however they have been taken directly from the author's portfolio. The writer would fain hope that his views of the relation between object and subject, might attract the attention of candid and competent critics, because on the truth of these views the entire worth of his speculations depends. If the objective sphere of human existence is material, or external to the subjective, then the relation of God to man is of course external, and theology consequently is bound at once to resign every rational pretension, and fall back to the rudest and most loathsome fetichism. But if, as the writer maintains, and

in his own opinion has demonstrated, a contrary relation subsists, then theology has only entered upon a career of unexampled brilliancy, because every position she takes henceforward will be fortified by science, and so claim the equal approval of the heart and the head.

New York, *March*, 1852.

LECTURE I.

DEMOCRACY AND ITS ISSUES.

DEMOCRACY AND ITS ISSUES.

It is my design to offer a few observations on the genius of Democracy, and the peculiar bearing it exerts upon the destiny of humanity.

Our institutions are Democratic. That is to say, the idea which they more or less incorporate, is the sovereignty of the people. The entire import of this idea may be best gathered from a brief reference to the ideas which have hitherto borne rule in the political earth, and against which Democracy is a protest.

The ideas which under one form or another have hitherto borne rule in the political world, are two, monarchy and aristocracy. Monarchy asserts the right of one person or one family to govern others. Aristocracy asserts the right of one class of persons to govern other classes. Against these two claims, Democracy is a protest. It denies the claim of any one man to govern other men, and

the right of any one class to govern other classes. It asserts that the people are rightfully sovereign, and possess the exclusive claim to the governing function.

Thus the Democratic idea exhibits a purely negative development. It is revolutionary, not formative. It is born of denial. It comes into existence in the way of denying established institutions. Its office is rather to destroy the old world, than fully to reveal the new. You have only to fix your thought upon it for a moment, to perceive that it is not directly constructive. Thus it alleges the people's exclusive right to govern themselves. Now, when it speaks of the people, it means the people. It does not mean any special portion of the people, as, for example, a numerical majority in contradistinction to a minority, or the male portion in contradistinction to the female, but the whole people without difference. But now, if you regard the people as a unit, if you regard their polity as expressing their united interests—the interests of the minority as well as of the majority—you instantly perceive that their polity can, in no proper sense of the word, be pronounced governmental, but simply administrative. The government in that case simply utters or carries out the entire will of the people. It has no will but to do the will of the whole people. Consequently, its function is purely ministerial or servile.

Thus the Democratic idea, in affirming the people's sovereignty, does in effect reduce government into a mere public ministry or service. It utterly explodes the old conceptions of government, as having an authority derived from some other source than the people. It is only while imperfectly evolved as in this country, in which not the whole people, but an ill-defined majority, rules, that it tolerates institutions which exhibit some faint remnant of authority. Our institutions do not, as yet, by any means, perfectly incorporate the Democratic idea. They exhibit a far more advanced development of it than has been attained anywhere else, but still fall very far short of giving it perfect expression. The great advantage, as it appears to me, which our position claims, is this: that we publicly recognise the worth of the Democratic idea, and stand committed by our past history, and our present tendencies, to allow it a complete evolution. It cannot be doubted by any attentive observer of our national and state legislation, that the tendency among us, from the beginning, has been to curtail the force of government, to reduce its legislative branches into a complete docility to the popular will, and make the executive branch more and more purely executive. And if this be undeniable, if such be the continual operation of the Democratic idea, you will readily admit that its tendency is to destroy

all absolute authority over men, all such authority as is not authenticated by the welfare of the people, and, consequently, to convert our political institutions into social ones.

Now why do I allege these things? Is it from any dissatisfaction with our institutions? Is it with a view to suggest distrust of the Democratic tendency? God forbid! I have no such dissatisfaction or distrust. I see nothing in our future but hope and abundant cheer, and I see these things only as the direct offspring of our unfaltering allegiance to the principle of Democracy. No, I allege them only for the purpose of proving to you what you, perhaps, may not have fairly considered, that Democracy is not so much a new form of political life, as a dissolution or disorganization of the old forms. It is simply a resolution of government into the hands of the people, a taking down of that which has before existed, and a re-commitment of it to its original sources, but is by no means the substitution of anything else in its place. It signalizes the period of puberty in the race, the period which separates the child from the man, a period of dissonance presenting very often a disagreeable commingling of the two extremes. If you recollect, that period in the history of the individual is often extremely unhandsome. The urchin has outgrown the jacket and dickey of infancy, but is still a world too small for the stand-

ing collar and long-tailed coat of manhood. His actual powers are small, but his instincts are unlimited. He has the thoughts of boyhood, but he utters them with a voice more hoarse than the adult man's. He has the sentiment of freedom, but he knows no positive or manly methods of demonstrating it. He attemps it chiefly by rudeness towards his progenitors, calls his father the old man, and his mother the old woman, and gives out, on every occasion, a suspicion that they have been over-estimated. He renounces the customs and statutes of the paternal mansion, bullies the servants and his younger brothers, and hastens to involve himself in courses which afflict the older people with the saddest auguries of the future man.

It is so with our own nation, arrived at Democracy. We are greatly more estimable for our criticism than for our performance, for the judgment and execution we have wrought upon vicious forms of government, than for the realization of any final and perfect form for ourselves. We have aroused the people to self-respect, by leading them out from under the burdensome yoke of kings and nobles, but we have not shown them how to be at peace and unity among themselves. We are good by comparison, not by position. When compared with the polities of the Old World, we present the auroral beauty of the morning emerging from the

thick night; but the glowing morning does not always ensure an unclouded noon. I see in our present political attainments everything to love and admire, when I contrast them with those of the Old World, because our polity recognises on all its front, the great truth that the *true* ruler of the people, in all time, must be the *servant* of the people. But when I look to see how this truth is practically administered, I confess my enthusiasm somewhat subsides. For the ruler, when closely regarded, turns out to be the servant, not of the whole people, but a majority of them, and I find so eager a rivalry for political supremacy going on among the people, as proves that the interests of the whole are not chiefly studied.

Democracy, then, is still imperfectly embodied even among us. Monarchy asserts the rule of one man; aristocracy the rule of a minority. Our institutions assert the rule of a majority. These latter consequently exhibit a very decided advance upon the old institutions, but are by no means conclusive. They indicate the progress of the democratic idea, but are very far short of giving it a complete expression. If the rule of a majority be valid as against that of a minority, much more must the rule of the whole be valid as against that of a mere majority; and so far, accordingly, our institutions sustain and subserve the sentiment of Democracy. But when the sentiment becomes

fully acknowledged, or attracts the universal homage of mankind, it will disown our present political institutions no less than all past ones. It will disown, in fact, all merely *political* forms, and claim a purely social manifestation.

For the Democratic idea, the idea of the people's sovereignty, implies above all things their exemption from arbitrary rule, implies that they recognise no authority which the interests of their own welfare do not confer. And this pretension, you will observe, is directly fatal to all merely political or national existence. Political or national existence is based upon the sacredness or perpetuity of certain institutions. The nation is represented by these institutions, so that if you destroy these latter, you at the same time destroy the nationality they embody. If, for example, you could destroy the institutions of monarchy and nobility in England, and establish republican institutions in their place, you would completely change the existing nationality, the present political life of that country. Or if you should simply remove its existing institutions, without substituting any other, you would utterly destroy its nationality, or reduce it to political nonentity. The people would still exist, of course, but not as a nation cognizable to other nations. Its peculiar institutions alone give it national form, or political unity, and render it intelligible to other nations.

This being the case with every nation, with every form of political life known to the world, it is manifest that the Democratic idea, in affirming the sovereignty of the people, or their responsibility to their own welfare alone, vacates every mode of national or political existence, by vacating the sacredness of the institutions on which such existence is based. In affirming the sovereignty of the people, the Democratic idea denies institutions any intrinsic or absolute sanctity, any sanctity save that which they derive from reflecting the popular well-being. It avouches the sole sacredness of humanity, and allows no sanctity to institutions underived from that source. Thus it has hitherto seemed good to our people to entrust their executive administration to a President, eligible every four years, and their legislative action to the two Houses of Congress. But should the people now deem it good to abolish the Presidency, transferring its functions to the Senate, or to abolish the Senate also, leaving the House of Representatives alone chargeable with the political interests of the country, Democracy would ratify the step, because the institutions in question possess no intrinsic authority, but derive their force wholly from the popular will. Thus Democracy everywhere proclaims the superiority of man to institutions, allowing the latter no respect, however consecrated by past worth, save in so far as they also reflect

the present interests of humanity. It allows no usage nor recorded statute whatever, any binding obligation which is underived from the instincts of the universal human heart.

It is clear, then, that the promise we behold in Democracy has not a primary regard to our political destiny. National aggrandizement or glory, which was the aim of the kingdoms of the Old World, is not what we are specially to look for. Our glory is to be an inward, rather than an outward one. Our geographical position and immense territorial resources will, doubtless, secure us a long career of political prosperity. But our political institutions do not, of themselves, inspire enthusiasm and exert no authority. They are felt to be the expression or symbol of something more sacred than themselves, which is the interests of humanity; and they possess, therefore, no absolute sanctity. Every institution descended to us from the past, descends to us upon trial. If it do not secure to us the benefits it secured to its inventors, it possesses no claim to our observance, but must give way to new institutions adapted to the new wants.

The principle of Democracy, which legitimates this result, is enthroned in our polity, and what is more, vivifies the newest affections and thoughts of all people. It is not a conventionality of man. It is an actual tendency of the Divine Providence,

felt all along the progress of human history, and marching now in open day to a complete and triumphant evolution. Happy are they, therefore, who no longer think of resisting or impeding it. But, above all, happy are they who betimes joyfully accept it with all the merely political changes it induces, believing that the paternal Wisdom, whose instrument it is, designs only good and no evil from it, and that in lieu of every edifice removed, He will build up another so glorious that the former will never again come into mind.

But now you will reasonably ask me, what positive or constructive results I anticipate from Democracy? You will ask me what *is* the nature of the benefits, if they are not political, which Democracy is going to introduce? The question admits of an easy, and, I cannot doubt, a completely satisfactory reply.

The positive or constructive results, then, which I anticipate from Democracy, are of a moral or social character, rather than political. The benefits which it heralds for humanity, will lie not in the increased external splendor of a nation, but in the increase of just, amicable, and humane relations amongst all its members. In short, I look upon Democracy as heralding the moral perfection of man, as inaugurating the existence of perfectly just relations between man and man, and as con-

sequently preparing the way for the reign of infinite Love.

This hope or confidence in Democracy is justified, you will perceive, by the fundamental meaning of the word. For Democracy means nothing more than the self-government of the people. Now, a capacity of self-government supposes in its subject a wisdom proportioned to his needs, and Democracy, therefore, implicitly attributes such wisdom to humanity. It supposes that men are capable of so adjusting their relations to each other, as that they will need no police or external force to control them, but will spontaneously do the right thing in all places and at all times. Thus Democracy really does contemplate a time when all coercion and restraint shall be disused in the conduct of human affairs, and when, consequently, every man will *freely* do unto others as he would have others to do unto him.

It is precisely here that we discern the difference between the Old World and the New, and perceive how Democracy silently prepares a new triumph for humanity. The fundamental conviction of the Old World—the conviction which lay at the bottom of all its stringent theories of government—was a distrust of humanity. This distrust was doubtless justifiable, because humanity had not yet fully manifested itself, nor proved the righteousness of its instincts. The immense mass of man-

kind was enslaved both physically and intellectually, and the fruits of slavery, in either sphere, are not such as reflect credit upon humanity. Human nature was thus unfairly dealt with, being asked to bring forth the fruits of freedom while it was itself in bondage, and being condemned because it did not obey the absurd requisition. Yet men do not plant a peach tree in the rock, and then ask it to bring forth its proper fruit. They place it in a congenial soil, and amidst favorable skiey influences, and so leave it to justify itself.

But times have changed since these conceptions of humanity were begotten. The mass of mankind has been gradually working upwards into comparative freedom, and silently enforcing a profound modification of the old judgments. This has been the case all over the world; but in this country the moral lesson accruing from the changed condition of the masses, is especially irresistible. The great lesson which this country teaches, has not been set forth, it seems to me, with that distinctness which it claims. Our true glory, in my opinion, is not that we enjoy, by means of our institutions, an unequalled material prosperity. It is that we, being our own rulers, having no government but one of our own creation, with no army to overawe us, have yet exhibited in all things the most orderly tendencies, and so refuted forever the

old despotic theories of the essential corruption of human nature.

This lesson can never be gainsaid. When you tell me of the ineradicable evil of human nature, I point you to these United States for an illustration on the largest scale of its uncontrolled tendencies. Here you will doubtless see individual corruption and disorder as well as elsewhere, because society here, as well as elsewhere, is not scientifically adjusted by the reconciliation of the private and public interests of its members. But you will not see, in the associated action of the people at large, any of that wilfulness, disorderliness, and ferocity which the theories in question charge upon humanity when left to itself. You find, on the contrary, a general urbanity and fellow-feeling, a proverbial deference for the female sex, enlarged sympathy for the distressed and destitute, ample provision for the interests of science and education, a lively enthusiasm for the progress of the arts, a boundless hope in the future, and a complete acquiescence in the power of peaceful legislation.

This it is which constitutes the primary claim of these United States to the reverence of the world, that they have thus far vindicated humanity from the charge of essential depravity. It is indeed a grateful recollection, when one is in foreign countries, amidst the enormous machinery there at work

to keep the people in what is called order, to remember that in his own country this machinery scarcely exists at all, and, where it does exist, possesses no tenure apart from the popular will. But even then the grand charm of the recollection is the gratification it offers to an enlarged humanitary sentiment, rather than a shallow and conceited patriotism; for no one is foolish enough to suppose that American human nature differs radically from European, or that the people will not one day justify themselves on the one continent as fully as they are now doing on the other.

It may very well be that some of my hearers have not fully considered the moral bearings of Democracy, and are not prepared therefore to yield a perfect assent to my claims for it in that behalf. I would like accordingly to occupy the remainder of this lecture with a fuller elucidation of that point. First of all, let me re-state my exact position.

I say, then, that the inevitable result of the Democratic tendency will be such an improvement of the moral or social relations of men, as will completely obviate the necessity of coercive institutions, or exhaust the function of a restrictive police.

The powers that be are ordained of God. That is to say, government represents the unitary interests of society, those interests which are paramount to every other. Every governmental insti-

tution has been a standing testimony to the harmonic destiny of society, a standing proof that the life of man is destined for peace and amity, instead of disorder and contention. No one can doubt that such has been the origin and meaning of government among mankind. No one can doubt that if human life had been perfect in the infancy of the race, that is to say, if just social relations had existed from the beginning, government would never have been thought of as a necessity of human society. Its existence is simply a confession of the *immaturity* of society. Because the true fellowship of man with man is imperfectly realized, therefore the magistrate is bound to bear the rod, symbol of that sovereign unity before which all private differences are bound to disappear.

Now, if government could have rightly discerned its function from the beginning, and remained true to it, by continually expanding as the wants of society demanded its expansion, men could never have quarrelled with it. But government, in the infancy of human culture, could, of course, entertain only the narrowest conceptions of its real function. It indeed claimed a personality at that time quite distinct from its function, and identified its interests with certain families and classes of the people, instead of the entire mass. Hence the efforts which are making at this day in the Old World, to overthrow established governments, and

remit royal families into the shade of private life. It is very idle to expect any but a successful issue to these attempts. They may fail for a while, but in the long run they must succeed, because governments are merely the instruments or lieutenants of humanity, and are therefore essentially responsible to it. They are liable to be summoned to their audit at any moment, and if any chronic infidelity to their trust be found attaching to them, they are sure to be cashiered.

This identification of human interests with certain personal interests, is the plague of man in every sphere. It involves a certain practical atheism, and so contradicts the deepest instincts of the heart. How absurd the idea that the universal Father cares one whit more for Queen Victoria, personally, than he does for the scullion who removes the ashes from her grate! It is her function only which is divine. It is her glory to sit in the seat she does, at the head of her glorious people. That seat confers upon her all the honor she enjoys, and receives not one particle from her. If, then, she claim any personal superiority to other men, any consideration apart from the humanitary function she wields, she puts herself in conflict with destiny, and is sure, sooner or later, to provoke a righteous retribution.

I say a rightcous retribution, because nothing is truer than that man's loyalty is at bottom never

due to persons. The brute is essentially servile. He obeys a will superior and foreign to his own. And before man has been elevated out of brute conditions, before he has been lifted out of the bondage of his nature, by a beneficent social culture, into the obedience of divine ideas, persons also dominate his imagination, and receive his allegiance. But, clearly, this is a transient state of man, his rudimental and lowest state. For, as culture dawns upon him, he perceives that persons are worthy only in so far as they represent something higher than themselves—only in so far as they represent a goodness which is infinite or divine. This is the glory of Christianity, in this consists its spirituality, that it makes a man's loyalty due only to humanitary truth and goodness, and never to persons, save as representing these. If, then, a person truly represent a humanitary good, if he seek no covert personal gain by the representation, there need be no fear of the decline of loyalty. But if the person cease merely to represent, and assume himself *to be* the reality, to be the good to which man's homage is due, then loyalty itself is outraged, and demands his instant overthrow. Rebellion, in this case, seems a divine necessity, and the memories of those who successfully organize it, remain a cherished possession to the race.

The truth is, that you miss the whole meaning—

the whole humanitary worth—of both the regal and sacerdotal office from history, unless you look upon them as claiming a purely representative sacredness. Both the king and the priest severally symbolize that divine or perfect man whose life descends to him from within, or from God, and whom nature and society shall therefore perfectly obey. Hence you find the king and the priest placed above all physical and social subjection. You find them not merely exempted from servile labor, put above the reach of want, and adorned with luxury and power, but invested also with moral sanctity, or such a superiority to merely secular men, as absolves them from the responsibility the latter are under to civil law for their actions. If you will look at the state of Europe, previously to the democratizing of the Church in the Protestant Reformation, you will observe that both the king and the priest were exempt from secular jurisdiction. "The king can do no wrong," was a maxim of political ethics, never practically gainsaid before the Reformation. And the immunity of the clergy from civil penalty, in case of any flagrant offence against good morals, stands still expressed in the now almost purely traditional phrase, "benefit of clergy."

This conventional superiority of the king and the priest to the ordinary lot of man, arose, I say, out of their symbolic character, was due exclu-

sively to their representative worth. Both of them officially symbolized that perfected aspect of man in nature, which, so far from having been then historically achieved, had not even been confessed as an idea by the most advanced intelligences, but which nevertheless was infallibly bound in the fulness of time to cover the earth with the knowledge of God, as amply as the waters cover the sea. Neither functionary, of course, had any private worth above other men, but both were often, on the contrary, owing to the inevitably corrupting influence of their privileged position, men of signally bad morality. But their public worth was so great—their worth to humanity considered as representing the Lord, or man of destiny, to whom nature and society owe an unlimited allegiance—that we willingly shroud their private vices in oblivion. These vices prove, of course, that they were *not* the man whom they represented; prove that they were only the unconscious instruments, the emptiest and most superficial symbols of his crowded and intimate sanctity. In a word, the intrinsic baseness of the representative served, of itself, to glorify the principal.

It seems to me that any Christian king or Christian priest who should now manifest a slight perception of the true *spirituality* of his function, would be honored of all men, as no king or priest had ever been honored before. No human being

would object to Queen Victoria's state or emoluments, provided that she admitted her purely representative character—provided that she admitted her complete responsibility to that perfect or divine man whose eventual glory she prefigures. On the contrary, every one would then feel a common interest in cherishing her, in aggrandizing her state, and making it lustrous with all the splendor of romance. So should all men bow to-morrow to the crozier of the pope, if he would confess its purely prophetic or symbolic significance—if he would confess that he stands forth only to avouch that inmost purity which shall one day consecrate universal man, and repugn accordingly every private lust which brings him into conflict with human destiny.

Government, then, has a purely humanitary or representative basis. Its whole end and intention is to proclaim the unity of man, and guard the interests of that unity. Its function is to reconcile the interests of the individual with those of the mass, to see that the utmost possible harmony prevail between each and all of its subjects. Of course the restrictive or coercive service of government is needed only so long as the forms of society do not fulfil this unity or harmony, only so long as the fellowship of man with man is incompletely realized. Because the moment society becomes perfect, the moment all legalized privi-

lege ceases among its subjects, and every man becomes the equal of every other in the public care, that moment you make it the interest of the individual to cherish the good of the whole, because his own advantage is identified with it; and if you can make it the *interest* of man to be orderly, of course you need no machinery of police to ensure that result. It will take place of itself, without any compulsion.

Now this is precisely what Democracy tends to produce, a reconciliation of the public and private interests of men. It designs to give all men, women, and children exact equality before the law, or in the public regard, and precisely in proportion to the degree in which this tendency is realized, does it become the interest of every man to maintain public order. The reason why evil exists among mankind, is that their outward life, their life as determined by institutions, does not fully accord with their inward or essential life, the life they have in God. God is infinite goodness, infinite truth, infinite power. If, therefore, the institutions of human society are not careful to serve this essential infinitude of man; if they do not incessantly endeavor to lift *all* men up out of the slough of natural destitution, and equalize culture, refinement and comfort among them, they are not faithful to the divine intent, and must fall into disuse. It is nothing but this legalized

injustice among men, this organized and chronic inequality among them, which begets what are termed the "dangerous classes" in the European communities. These communities tolerate a privileged class; that is to say, they will ensure a child born of one parentage, a good education, good manners, a graceful development in every respect, sumptuous lodging, sumptuous food, sumptuous clothing; and they will ensure another child, born of an opposite parentage, the complete want of all these things: and yet they wonder at the existence of a dangerous class among them. Let them change these institutions; let them ensure all the children born among them a precisely equal social advantage and estimation, and they will soon see the dangerous classes disappear. They will soon destroy the sole existing motive to crime; for crime is always directed against mere arbitrary advantage. I admit that a man whose passions have been wounded by another, even without any blame on the part of that other, may be tempted, in the anguish of disappointment, to blaspheme his innocent rival, and even take his life on occasion. But this is not the criminality society chiefly suffers from. Men willingly bear with the injury springing out of a wounded self-love, knowing their own liability to need the same forgiveness. It is deliberate, systematic crime from which society suffers, crime that gives name to large classes and

localities; and this criminality is the product exclusively of vicious legislation, of institutions which insist upon distributing the bounties of Providence unequally.

Man has derived no original boon from legislation. The service it has rendered him has been purely ministerial, consisting in a very slow denial of the chance supremacy of one race over others, or of one class over others. The utmost it has done, has been to clothe the instinct of human unity in progressive but temporary formulas. It has by no means *created* the unity it has acknowledged. It has merely developed the essential unity which all men have in God, their infinite source. Even in so far as the old legislation has recognised the unity of humanity, it has been without any wide awake assent, without any clear perception of the sublime issues involved in its action. In fact, a certain instinct of danger to itself renders the legislative power slow to look the truth fully in the face. For the moment human unity becomes broadly organized, or what is the same thing, the moment class legislation ceases and privilege becomes a thing of naught; the legislator will have no function but to serve laws higher than himself, laws of God, revealed by God's true minister, science.

The world waits for nothing else, in order to begin its eternal Sabbath, than this legislative re-

cognition of human unity by the destruction of the last remnant of privilege. No argument can be needed on this subject, with the beautiful analogy of the human body before us. You never find a man wilfully cheating himself. Why? Because there are no antagonistic interests in his body, but each member thrives by the active concurrence of all the rest. Undoubtedly there is a hierarchy in the body, just as there is in all true society or fellowship; but this hierarchy is organized by use, the highest in function only being highest in honor. But notwithstanding this essential unity of the body, in fact *because* of it, it is manifest that if you could contrive some authentic legislation by which the nose should be declared, without reference to its intrinsic power or faculty, the most honorable member of the body, and entitled to the amplest measure of life or enjoyment, you would instantly prompt a conspiracy amongst the other interests, mouth, ears, eyes, legs and arms, to cheat this privileged member on all occasions, and stint it of its unhallowed revenues.

I beg to be fairly understood. I am very far from deficient in a feeling of respect to the past. I could not dare to wish that a single feature of past legislation had been omitted; for I believe in God, or in the infinite goodness and wisdom which embed human destiny, and which therefore prevent any disaster befalling it; which therefore, in

fact, make all events equally tributary to it. Thus vicious legislation was anything but vicious when it took place. Privilege was a great and benign fact when the whole race was swamped in natural impotence; when mere physical might would otherwise have dominated in human affairs, and man have been reduced infinitely below the brute, by the very energy which, when properly recognised, raises him infinitely above it. The strong man, the man of immense thews and sinews, the man of gigantic will, how he would have swept the earth before him, had it not been for the institution of private property, and for the strenuous assertion on the part of society of every man's right to the undisturbed possession of his property, no matter how inordinate its bulk might be. Property has been the ægis and palladium of humanity—of human freedom, the symbol of all righteousness. Wherever it planted its foot, it said to the raging waves of brute force: Peace, be still! It proclaimed a higher fact in man than nature, even God; it proclaimed a higher fact than community of nature, the fact of incommunicable or sacred individuality. The whole force of society was originally dedicated to the service of this fact. The vindication of it was the original meaning of all our existing police, whether civil or ecclesiastical. Why has not the law of society, the law of property, been communistic from the beginning?

It has been because society has overruled nature, or subjected it to the needs of man's ultimate destiny; because it has recognised a truly infinite life in man, and devoutly kept itself for the service and vindication of that. Society has no objection to the communism which flows from the free individuality of man, has no objection to the freest communication of outward goods which at the same time consists with individual good-will. On the contrary, society rather applauds me when I, out of the abundance of my spiritual wealth or generosity, make you, and you, and every one sharers of my material goods. It has no objection, but on the contrary the greatest good-will towards the extremest possible communism which dates from the spiritual freedom, from the unforced consent, of the parties. But this previous basis it will exact at all hazards. It will first have the divine element in man recognised above all things, the principle of individual sacredness or freedom: then organize as you please, no possible detriment can ensue to the interests which society guards.

Let us therefore not condemn, let us thoroughly justify society in the past. What though her stringent legislation on behalf of persons has become, in the course of time, a shelter for the greatest inhumanity, yet remember the distance between our present position and the chaos out of which we sprang. For all that we now enjoy of goodness,

and knowledge, and power, for all the benefits which flow from our intercourse with nature and our kind, we are indebted to past legislation, to past society, and far be it from me accordingly to attempt the slightest disparagement of it. By all the difference between myself and the Hottentot, between my children and his children, I am prevented cherishing any feeling towards *the past* but gratitude.

But the past is only *in order to* the future. It must no more pretend to dominate the future, than the foundation of a house should pretend to dominate the superstructure, than the egg should pretend to dominate the chick of which it is totally unconscious. These similitudes accurately reflect the relation of the past to the future. The past is the foundation of the future; it is the unhandsome and concealed but still massive and adequate basis upon which the superb columns of our future manhood shall rest. It is the egg which houses and nourishes for a time a life superior to itself. But who ever heard of the foundation giving law to the house, prescribing its rooms, determining its architecture? The foundation is laid, on the contrary, with reference exclusively to the wants of the superstructure: it is the house which fashions the foundation. And whoever heard of the egg giving law to the chick, prescribing its form, determining its faculties? The egg, on the contrary,

is formed with reference to the needs of its tenant exclusively: it is the chick which fashions the egg.

The true worth of the past, then, to a rational regard, lies in its use to the future, just as to a rational regard the true worth of a foundation lies in its suitableness to the superstructure, or the true worth of an egg in its use to the future life which it embosoms. To prize the foundation for its own sake, would virtually be to keep oneself houseless forever: to prize the egg for its own sake, would virtually be to prevent incubation, and finally, of course, to deprive oneself even of eggs. Just so to prize the past for its own sake, and seek to perpetuate its institutions because they once have been, is forever to exclude the lustrous and divine future of humanity: it is, figuratively, to live always in cellars and cultivate addled eggs: which truly were an unhandsome destiny!

There is an immense thoughtlessness on all this subject among otherwise thinking men. Institutions, when once they get chronic and hardened by habitual reverence, seem utterly to quench that genial spirit in man out of which they originally spring. They oppress the mental activity, instead of enliven it. Every institution now upon earth had originally a purely humane intention, a purely humanitary spirit. The sole worth of it stood in this intention or spirit. But when once it had got

established in the regard of men, and become identified with the governing interests of society, it of course claimed a literal or actual sanctity as well as a spiritual one. And hence its observance or non-observance became a social distinction, became a ground of righteousness or unrighteousness among its subjects; so that the institution which was intended for the blessing of all, becomes at last, through the loss of its spiritual meaning, an actual curse to all. Such has been the history of every institution, to begin in blessing and end in cursing, and this simply because the living spirit of it has always been swamped by its dead letter; because the stupid and brutish letter has claimed to be *identical* with the infinite and divine spirit.

Such is the blindness of all rituality, of all literality since the world has stood, that it claims itself to fulfil the spirit. The letter aims to confer of itself the righteousness which only the spirit confers. It supposes that it promotes the spirit directly or positively, instead of negatively and indirectly, and hence becomes itself the very worst enemy its own original spirit acknowledges. In fact the letter of a law, when it once looks upon itself as identical with the spirit, when it once regards itself as anything else but the rudest and most perishable husk of the spirit, is the *only* enemy the spirit knows. And the malignity of

its enmity fills the world with contention. Let me dwell upon the point for a few moments.

I say that it is only negatively or indirectly, only by contrast or antagonism, that the letter of a law serves its spirit. It is only as a foil and not as a fulfilment that the righteousness of the letter promotes that of the spirit. The spirit is not a more subtle letter, it is not the letter carried to the greatest possible pitch of refinement, any more than the kernel of a nut is a refinement of the shell. The letter is always the temporary envelope or shell merely of the spirit, never meant to dominate, but only to house it, until such time as it is ripe for freedom, and may be discerned in its own divine or *infinite* lustre. The mere literalist, the man who fancies that he is going to compass the spirit of an institution by a zealous observance of its letter, makes no less signal a mistake than he who should suppose himself likely to realize a great harvest of nuts by forever preserving the shells inviolate. The shell of a nut must be broken and cast away when the kernel is mature. And the letter of a law must be seen to be intrinsically servile and worthless before we can do the least honor to its spirit. The longer we preserve the shell of a nut inviolate, when once the nut is ripe, the surer the damage done to the kernel. And the more pride we take in our literal conformity to a law, the more wretchedly meagre is

our spiritual conformity. Of course, no man should ever steal, or violate any just relation to his neighbor; but *to make a virtue of not stealing*, to find all one's aspirations met in simply refraining from the violation of law, in simply doing what it is one's duty to do, this is infinitely unmanly. The publicans and harlots are in a vastly more hopeful plight, since no-righteousness is better than a spurious or fallacious one. Let me illustrate.

Suppose you should find a man preferring a claim upon public gratitude, a claim to social distinction, because he had never violated the law of society. Would you not say to him: "my friend, you have only done your duty in not violating the law; you have simply done what it would have been discreditable to you not to have done. Do you seek a reward therefore for not discrediting yourself, for not being base? Do you wish pay for doing what you *owe it* (ought) to do, for doing your duty? Clearly the felon who expiates his violation of the law to-day upon the scaffold, claims a sweeter manhood than this."

Now what is the philosopny of this remonstrance? Why should not the State give prizes for virtue? Why should not man be paid for doing his duty? Or why is it simply discreditable to him as you say not to have done it? Evidently you proceed upon the notion that morality is not the true plane of human life—that the plane of

duty lies below the proper level of human life. If it is simply discreditable to me not to do my duty, if I should find no ground of boasting in the circumstance of having done my duty, then manifestly it must be because the range of duty falls somewhat below the normal pitch of my manhood. It must be included or presupposed in my manhood. My whole duty is summed up in the maintaining just relations with my fellow man. If then I may not boast of maintaining these relations, if I may claim no honor for them, it must be because the sphere of my manhood lies above that sphere and involves it. If I deserve no medal because I have not committed murder, or theft, or adultery, it must be because it is unmanly or brutal to commit such things. It is not in accordance with the manly nature to deal injuriously with others: hence I as a man am proved very foolish to have sought a reward for acting in accordance with my nature.

No law can ever say what man *is*. It can only say what he *is not*. It can give no positive but only a negative likeness of him. And this for a very good reason, that man is the creature of infinite perfection, and to know him therefore truly requires one to know his source, which is a knowledge that no lawgiver we have yet known can be said to have mastered. It can only describe him by negatives, or contrasts drawn from the present

imperfect style of manhood. It can only say the things he does not. The things he does he alone can show when he comes. Looking upon the present immature style of man, and dipping its pencil in colors therefore at once recognizable, the law describes the perfect man as one who does not steal, nor lie, nor murder, nor commit adultery. "Such is a literal glimpse of the true man," it says, "but remember that it is only a glimpse adapted to your sensuous comprehension. It is so adapted, because you are familiar with theft, lying, murder and adultery, and the divine or perfect man, the man of destiny, will be at all events utterly ignorant of these things. What *positive* worth shall be in him, what divine and infinite beauty, no one can foretell, because no one can comprehend the divine power. But this negative virtue shall surely be there, and this is enough to discriminate him from you.

"Be not deceived therefore," the law proceeds. "Do not imagine that you have a worthy or adequate portrait of the true man in this mere negative outline. I simply wish to keep you from fancying yourself, as naturally pronounced, the true or final achievement of God in humanity, the true divine man, and hence I reverse your own natural features as the readiest and most intelligible witness to his diversity. I make use of you only as my palette to apprise the world of a greater than you

who is yet to come in your nature. My office, the office of all law or government, is to bear witness to a perfect humanity, to a perfect style of manhood which shall appear in the consummation of the ages, and cover the earth with the intimate splendor of God. I must therefore use the materials presented to my hand. As there is nothing on earth at present like this man, as one person presents no more positive approximation to him than another, I can only describe him negatively, or by such attributes as plainly distinguish him from the style of manhood now prevalent.

"I repeat it therefore, be not deceived. Do not imagine that in giving you this portrait, I aim to inflame your emulation. Do not imagine that I have the least idea of your being able, by all your negative labors, to compass the most infinitesimal measure of positive conformity to this perfect man. Do not imagine that by refraining from overt lying, from fraud, murder, and adultery, you are going to bring yourself one whit nearer his real personality than the most abandoned profligate. Lest you should be tempted to this fatally injurious estimate of my purpose, I will add an additional feature to my portrait: I will say that the true or divine man not merely does not take the good name or other property of another, but he does not inwardly desire or covet them even.

And surely he must be an utter fool who can persuade himself that he keeps *that* prescription.

"This will infallibly prevent your fancying that I have the least intention to flatter you with my favor, will infallibly supersede those painful and disgusting asceticisms which otherwise you might be tempted to, in order to distinguish yourself from other men and so win my approbation. At all events it will leave you destitute of excuse in doing so. For it clearly avouches my sole purpose to be the attestation of a perfect humanity yet to come on the earth, and makes your proper attitude accordingly one of genuine humility, and at the same time of boundless hope."

So far the law.

You will now easily comprehend me when I say that the letter of the law serves the spirit negatively rather than positively: that the righteousness of the letter is a foil and by no means a fulfilment to that of the spirit. You perceive that it is an utter misconception of the spirit of the law to suppose that its object is to confer righteousness, or to give one man distinction above another. On the contrary its object is to shut up all men good and evil, saint and sinner, Pharisee and publican, under condemnation, that the righteousness of God which knows no distinction of persons, which is an infinite or positive righteousness and therefore laughs at such distinctions, might be

seen pertaining only to a higher and unitary style of man which should be revealed in the consummation of the ages, and which should reject all physical and all moral limitation.

No mistake so impedes the progress of the divine life in us, whether as individuals or communities, as to suppose that the office of law, or conscience, is to assert an absolute distinction between men, or to justify one class and condemn another. Its office is to show that the distinctions which *are* socially engendered among them, which in fact are inevitable to the infancy of human fellowship, are by no means absolute and have no value to an infinite regard, or in the divine sight. Its design never was to prove one man good and another evil in the divine eye, but only to prove that every man, the technically good as well as the technically evil, was alike helpless and worthless when viewed on his natural or finite side, and so to quicken the aspiration of all alike towards the coming divine man, the man of immemorial promise and prophecy, the man of destiny.

It is therefore a mortal offence done to the law, a vital injury done to its infinite or humane significance, when we look upon it as designed to institute division among men, instead of to promote unity. We dwarf our manhood by nothing so effectually as by cherishing these stupid moral differences between ourselves and others, differ-

ences growing out of various hereditary dispositions, out of difference of culture and of physical and social circumstances. The morally good man, because in certain aspects he differs very widely from the morally evil man, conceives the difference to be essential or absolute, and capable of attracting the divine regard. And consequently by the inevitable influence of this serpent-tuition, of this purely sensuous persuasion, he bends all his energy to inflame the difference, and so widen the very breach between himself and his fellow, which it is the sleepless effort of the divine love to annul.

The moral diversity which A, a technically good man, perceives between himself and B, a technically evil man, does not lead him to doubt the absoluteness of moral distinctions, does not lead him to dread these distinctions as tending to estrange man from his brother, and so to destroy human fellowship. On the contrary, this diversity strikes him as so much absolute superiority on his part, so much superiority in God's sight, which his very allegiance to God consequently binds him to intensify and so place an insuperable distance between himself and his fellow. Thus you observe that this man's humanity, or his sympathy with his kind, diminishes in the exact ratio of the increase of his morality, or his obedience to law. In so far as he cherishes the righteousness accruing from this

obedience, in so far does he cultivate a spirit of inhumanity, a temper of all ungodliness.

I have gone into this long analysis of the office of law or government in human affairs, in order to show that righteousness is not a thing of institution, that it can never be derived *ab extra*, but that it is a life and therefore derivable only *ab intra*. The use of all law or government among men has not been final but mediatory. Government has been a discipline, correcting our self-complacency, exhausting our pride, and so preparing us for the scientific recognition of human equality, for the scientific organization of human fellowship. Hence you perceive that in every country and in all time they who boast of the righteousness of the letter, they who claim to be the especial friends of law and order, and on that ground arrogate to themselves the divine favor, have been esteemed the true enemies both of God and man. Throughout the Old World's history, the devout and honorable classes of society, they for whose welfare chiefly the institutions of government are wielded, they who control legislation, who appoint the police, who hold the army and navy at their beck, in short the endowed and privileged interests of society, these are they who, because they claim the especial friendship and protection of the law, and hold their possessions by the alleged favor of the gods, are alone denounced by the law as its ene-

mies, as flagrantly hostile to its spirit, and as sure therefore to be swept into oblivion when that majestic spirit becomes more and more fully evolved.

I have no doubt, indeed I am entirely convinced, that the ruling and privileged classes in every community have boasted as many humane and beautiful individuals, as the opposite class. In their private or personal relations, they have been quite as apt to act with dignity as humble persons. In fact their aptitude is greater, owing to the advantage of superior culture. Look at the history of European society wherever you please, and you will find, in individuals of the privileged orders, evidences of the richest humanitary temper, and nothing can be more snobbish, therefore, than to indulge a personal disrespect towards these men. In truth they deserve a cordial respect, because they have maintained the truth and sweetness of our common humanity inviolate under the most inauspicious circumstances; for every one of a little experience knows that it is vastly harder to endure inordinate prosperity unspoiled, than it is inordinate adversity.

It is only as an organized class I point your attention to these men. Regard them, I say, in their political aspect, as a *political* interest merely, and they exhibit an inveterate inhumanity. Place them in the seat of supreme power, let the spirit of humanity present itself before them to ask some

lenient legislation, some legislation which perhaps may invade the realm of ancient privilege or traditional usage, and you may easily conjecture the answer it will get from them. An ignorance will be avowed of any law or usage of God superior to the established law or usage of the country, so entirely infantile and innocent as could not fail to be profoundly edifying under other circumstances. But these circumstances constitute the pinch.

Since the world has stood, man has known the obedience of two laws, one binding him to the service of society or his fellow-man, the other to the service of God or his own ideal. There is no necessary or essential conflict between these laws. One is interior to the other indeed, but for this very reason there can be no essential conflict between them. Had they the same orbit, then indeed collision would be inevitable; but as it is, we may be sure that whenever collision is imminent, the emergency arises out of some foolish attempt to confound their orbits or give the outer and lower law the supremacy due only to the inner and higher one.

The profoundest law man knows is the law he is under to God, or the law of his own destiny. The other law, the law of society, the law of his fellow-man, is altogether subservient to this. The law man is under to God, the law of his destiny, bids him aspire to all nobleness and beauty of life,

bids him lay aside all those trivial and timid and skulking virtues which are imposed upon him by the limitation of his nature, and walk erect in a manhood which shall overtop the skies, and make the lustrous stars burn with a deeper glow. If now the lower law, the law he is under to his fellow-man, puts him in conflict with this ideal; if it say to him, "Nay! he must obey this ideal only in so far as his existing ties to other men allow, and permit himself no aspiration, much less any action not duly prescribed by his forefathers in Parliament or Congress assembled:" then manifestly the lower law transcends its province, and must consent to immediate modification under pain of forfeiting the respect of mankind.

We should be ashamed to marvel at this old philosophy, older than granite, old as the laws of nature, for it is the very heart of the mystery of nature. "Thou fool," says Paul, "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, and that which thou sowest is not the body that shall be, but bare grain, whether wheat or some other: but God giveth it a body as pleaseth Him"—that is, a wholly unpredictable or imprescriptible body. Such is the universal law of spiritual life, the law of all spiritual evolution, to thrive or grow by the rupture of the old limitations, by the decease of the old forms. So the spirit of all morality, of all restrictive legislation, of all those ordinances springing out of

the commandments and doctrines of men, which bid us "Touch not this, taste not that, handle not the other," is never fulfilled by any conceivable devotion to the letter. The spirit of the law which bids me not to steal, is not fulfilled by my literal obedience. The spirit of the command being love to the neighbor, I may faithfully respect his property without any love whatever to himself. The spirit of the law is intense good-will towards my neighbor, is a state of my affections in other words, and therefore repugns any merely ritual satisfaction. My good-will towards my fellow-man is really infinite, is really unbounded by any of my finite obligations. Nothing that I can do for him, much more nothing that I merely refrain from doing, can therefore worthily express my good-will. Consequently no amount of actual righteousness, not the merely actual sanctity for example of all the good men who have lived from Socrates to Dr. Channing, would serve to satisfy the soul.

To this end then serves the law. Such is the end of government, an end altogether disciplinary or didactic, pointing to something beyond itself. No legalized state of man, no merely political institutes, exist for their own sake, will ever be capable of satisfying the soul. They are only, the best of them, a schoolmaster forbidding us to rest in our present attainments, and pointing our attention and quickening our aspirations to-

wards that perfect or divine man who is yet to glorify our flesh, and fulfil the law not by any stupid literalities, but by love. Consequently there are no such vital enemies to the law as they who render it a servile or superstitious devotion, as they who crave the righteousness it confers. There are no such vital enemies to the spirit or intent of an institution as they who insist upon its unconditional permanence, and live by the favor it dispenses. For all laws, all institutions of every sort, are subordinate to man, design his elevation. "The Sabbath which is the sacredest of institutions, was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." And he who said this brave saying, and was himself meanwhile the sacredest of persons, went still farther when he showed that not only institutions but persons also claimed this subserviency, by giving his life a sacrifice for humanity.

But let us at last draw to a close. The function of Democracy as we have seen is to prepare the way, by a disorganization of the political life of men, for their perfect society or fellowship. It is merely a baptism of the nations into a doctrine higher, grander, mightier than itself. It is a John the Baptist careering over the wilderness of old polities, saying Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand. Its doctrine is one essentially of repentance or preparation, denouncing old abuses, revealing the iniquity of past legislation,

exalting every valley of inequality, abasing every mountain of privilege, making straight whatsoever is crooked and smooth whatsoever is rough, so that all flesh from the smallest to the greatest shall experience the salvation of God.

I do not want of course to insist against your will, against the habits of your intelligence, upon the application of this typicality of John the Baptist to the function of Democracy. But I will insist that they who regard John and his water baptism, or doctrine of repentance from evil-doing, as a suitable forerunner to Jesus, and his baptism of the Holy Ghost, or doctrine of God's living presence and power in every man saint and sinner alike, can not reasonably demur at my assigning to the purely disorganizing agencies of Democracy so beneficent an influence upon human destiny. As Jesus needed no other preparation for his reception than the repentance which John preached, or the ceasing to do evil, so the fullest evolution of human destiny, the utmost blessedness the heart of man can desire, needs for its realization nothing more than that very work which Democracy is now performing, namely, the undoing of old and restrictive legislation, the breaking up the foundations of ancient privilege, the removing of every obstacle to the exact public equality of man with man.

I am entirely persuaded that nothing but the persistent and ever enlarging operation of the

Democratic principle, or what is the same thing, the destructive legislation now in progress, is requisite to inaugurate the divine life on earth, to bring about that great prophetic period to which all history from the beginning has tended, that everlasting Sabbath or rest which is to close in and glorify the brief but toilsome week of man's past experience. I have not the least hope in any constructive legislation towards this end. He who is familiar with the exquisite symbolism of the old Hebrew faith, knows with what formal sedulity every particular of the divine worship was prescribed, and how jealously every addition of human wisdom was barred and punished. This is but a type of the independence our true and God-given life bears to all legislation, to all outward prescription. It is a life which descends from God out of heaven, the heaven of man's inward spirit. All its laws are summed up in the real presence of God in every individual soul. And as in Solomon's Temple, "every stone was made ready before it was brought there, so that there was no sound of hammer nor of axe heard in the house while it was building:" so is it with this new life of man which is even now dawning upon the earth. It will reject all noisy legislation or prescription. It will deny all outward authority. Being an inward life, flowing exclusively from within the subject, all it asks of the outward is to serve or obey it, by

immediately ceasing to restrain or govern its outflow. Let this life finally become authenticated by society or the legislative power, it will soon shape the outward into the closest conformity with itself, making it teem with the affluent satisfaction of every human want.

Of course this issue is a thing of time, since it can only come about by such an illumination of the public conscience as shall make itself felt in legislation. But in a country like ours, whose institutions are democratic, or have no sacredness apart from the popular consent, there can be no excuse for impatience. Let those who complain, instead of bringing forth impracticable schemes of reform, set themselves to instruct the public understanding in regard to the true or harmonic destiny of society, and legislation will soon feel a sufficiently onward impulse.

Meanwhile it were greatly to be wished that our conservatives would abandon their paltry fears of the progress of Democracy. I confess that I too should partake these fears, if I believed that the salvation of man depended upon police, or that the perfect form of society was a political one. But I have no such belief. On the contrary, I have no faith in man's salvation, or in the progress of society, save from the very real and exhaustless presence of Deity within him, and see no virtue in police except where this cardinal truth is ignored,

or rather not yet scientifically demonstrated. No shabbier sight, it appears to me, meets the day than the one now so common, of some shameless dignitary in Church or State rising up to avow his distrust of the future, because kings are overthrown and popes sent skipping. To the mind of such a man, what more effectual or dignified part does God play in human affairs than Santa Claus?

The current scepticism in regard to the tendencies of human nature, proceeds upon the fallacy that a man's true wealth, the wealth he covets or prizes, is external to himself, consisting in the abundance of the things he possesses. The sceptic says that if you leave men free from police restraint, however well you may educate them, there will be no security for property. Of course then he believes that man values these outward possessions which we call property, above all things. There is no sheerer fallacy current than this. For the undue value men set upon this sort of possession now, grows out of its scarcity, grows out of the fact that so many are utterly destitute of it. Appetite is never excessive, never furious, save where it has been starved. The frantic hunger we see it so often exhibiting under every variety of criminal form, marks only the hideous starvation to which society subjects it. It is not a normal, but a morbid state of the appetite, growing exclusively out of the unnatural compression which is

imposed upon it by the exigencies of our immature society. Every appetite and passion of man's nature is good and beautiful, and destined to be fully enjoyed, and a scientific society or fellowship among men would ensure this result, without allowing any compromise of the individual dignity, especially without allowing that fierce and disgusting abandonment to them which disfigures so many of our eminent names in church and state, and which infallibly attests the uncleanness of our present morality.

Remove, then, the existing bondage of humanity, remove those factitious restraints which keep appetite and passion on the perpetual look out for escape, like steam from an overcharged boiler, and their force would instantly become conservative instead of destructive. For man is destined by the very necessity of his creation, for nothing but the obedience of his inward and divine self-hood, for the obedience of God within him. Even while he is utterly unconscious of his true or inmost self-hood, the aim of his whole existence, the end of all his struggle and toil is to realize it, and when it does dawn upon him, it sheds a complete calm upon the turbid sea of his outward relations.

The effect is irresistible. You cannot arouse a man to self-respect, to a sense of his proper humanity, to a consciousness of the divinity which constitutes his being, without rendering him supe-

rior to outward accident. He is no longer the sport of passion, of conscience, or of appetite. The master of the house has come at last, and his servants render him a prompt and joyous obedience. No more in a mere symbolic, but in a very real sense, the Lord has entered his holy temple: all the earth, the entire realm of the outward and finite, spontaneously keeps silence before Him.

LECTURE II.

PROPERTY AS A SYMBOL.

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One of the most interesting facts in the world's history, is the existence of private property. It is so familiar a fact as to require perhaps a mental effort to appreciate it, but its intrinsic significance is none the less extreme on that account.

In the first place it is a fact which pertains exclusively to human history. Neither mineral, vegetable, nor animal possesses any property apart from its natural organization. Its properties are exclusively natural, being shared by all other partakers of its nature. It has no private or individual properties, that is to say, no properties denoting an unseen spiritual force within the nature, and therefore suggesting the conception of personality.

With man the case is exactly otherwise. He is scarcely born into nature before this unseen spiritual force begins to assert itself, and claim a uni-

versal lordship. Do you take home with you as you go from your occupations in the evening, or return from a journey, a picture book or child's toy of any sort, and expose it to the gaze of your children: you all know how furious a storm of entreaty will greet you on every hand for the sole possession of the bauble. You may assure the little circle that each shall possess it in turn, that each shall enjoy it to the full. But no, each must call it his own absolutely, each must have complete possession of it, and then of course he will do the generous thing towards the others; but on the first point there can be no remission, and you are glad to purchase final quiet for yourself by bestowing it out and out upon the noisiest lungs of the group, promising the others that their turns shall come next time.

Not only does the phenomenon exhibit itself thus early, but we not seldom find it surviving the decay of nature, and growing stronger in fact as the mental powers decline. There is nothing about which age is generally so tenacious as property, nothing which it parts with so reluctantly, exhibiting very often a purely childish delight in the possession of useless wealth. The truth is that utility is by no means the paramount charm of wealth. Property is not generally valued as a means of enjoyment, save where it is inherited, and the party accordingly does not feel himself person-

ally identified with it. In the first bloom of youth, and in cases where the passions are largely developed, as love or friendship for example, then indeed the paternal acres very often melt away like wax before the sun. But these cases are exceptional. The rule is that property is valued for its own sake, and not with a primary view to enjoyment. So true is this that it is always considered worthy of an obituary mention, when a rich man has spent his money liberally. It is perhaps not mentioned on his tombstone, but it is always deemed creditable to him, when he has spent it even upon his pleasures, instead of hoarding it in his lifeless coffers. The mention we make of these things when they occur, proves that we are in the *habit* of prizing property for its own sake, and not merely for the enjoyments it may procure, because what is familiar and ordinary we do not think worthy of mention.

However, we need not argue the point, for every one's own experience is precisely apposite. Every one knows the domineering nature of the sentiment of personal property. Even those who have never owned an acre or a dollar unclaimed by their physical necessities, confess the truth by their aspirations as much as their more lucky fellows do by their experience. And we all alike equally confess it by the involuntary homage we pay to rich men. I admit that I have been taught a great deal

better. I admit that I should be very much ashamed to be caught toadying a rich man, and that I could say things on the baseness of such conduct which would really stir your blood. But all this is dramatic. I am acting a part, the part assigned me by public opinion. For in private, I feel an instinctive respect for property. It does in some mysterious but infallible way embalm the possessor, so that while my theory bids me defy him, I never come into his presence but with 'bated breath, and differ from him with painful reluctance. The treachery is universal. I have heard sermons on this subject which left no doubt on my mind that the preacher had completely conquered his natural weakness: but no, you have only to observe his daily intercourse with his flock to discover that it was the most transparent talk only, and that the beautiful manners he described belonged to an entirely different world from this.

Yes, let me say it with shame. If you, one of my friends undistinguished by property, invite me to dine with you, and Mr. Astor or Mr. Girard ask me to dine with either of them, I shall feel a much deeper flutter of pleasure from their invitation than yours. I gladly grant that you have private excellencies which they have not, that you have a larger heart, a subtler brain, and accomplishments which appeal to my inmost sympathy. But somehow your private manhood lacks that public

ratification and prestige of the skies, which to the carnal mind accompanies great possessions or great power, and I accordingly, miserable flunkey that I am! am compelled to regret that a previous engagement will prevent my doing justice to your excellent dinner.

Thus sentimentalize and even scold as we may, Property is power. Nothing in the world exercises such potent sway. The good and the bad, the wise and the ignorant, the polite and the vulgar, all alike feel it, though doubtless with a variety of manifestation. We may esteem it discreditable to our humanity that the fact should be so, but so the fact is nevertheless. I by no means desire to apologize for it. I would not save it from one jot of the odium which falls upon it. It is when viewed by itself, quite as disgusting a fact to me as to any one else, and I have no desire therefore to commend it to any one's approbation. I wish merely to state it—to place it clearly as a fact before your eyes, with a view to asking its real significance. Viewed superficially you may continue to abhor it as much as you please; but viewed substantially or interiorly it claims a profound humanitary meaning, and this it is which I would now commend to your attention.

What then does Property symbolize? What great fact of destiny underlies it, and gives it the universal sway it exerts over human affairs. I say

"what fact of destiny underlies it," because I find it quite impossible, for myself, to acquiesce in any theory of creation which makes the developments of human nature arbitrary or fortuitous. The conception is utterly abhorrent to my understanding, that any prominent or any trivial feature of human history might have been different from what it actually has been. My understanding reposes only in the conviction that an infinite or perfect wisdom embeds all the phenomena of human experience. And as there are not two sorts of wisdom in the world, so we may be very sure that creation exhibits the only order possible for it to exhibit, and presents us even in its most trivial results with matter capable of rewarding the amplest study.

"Very good," my hearer may say. "I also believe that a perfect wisdom underlies all the events of human history. I also believe that every event grand or trivial has had a rational and necessary origin, instead of an arbitrary and fortuitous one. Yet I do not see how this belief implies that every event of nature and history symbolizes some great feature of human destiny. I fully believe that God is perfectly good and perfectly wise, and that His providence alone governs the course of nature. But tell me how you gather from these facts that the course of nature symbolizes, corresponds to, or expresses human destiny?"

The reply to this request is plain, and need detain us only a few moments.

When I say that there is nothing arbitrary or fortuitous in the course of nature, I affirm in effect that nature obeys a perfect law, reflects a perfect standard. And if I am asked thereupon what this perfect law or standard is, I am constrained to reply the law or standard of a perfect humanity. I am constrained to this reply, because I can conceive of no perfection which is not human. The divine perfection is pre-eminently human. Whenever you attempt to conceive of God worthily, you conceive of a perfect man. You cannot conceive of goodness or wisdom in their highest potency save as attaching to the human form, save as resident in man. If you attempt to conceive for example of goodness under a mere mineral or vegetable or animal form, you instantly perceive that it is goodness of a much lower order than the human. You perceive that the goodness attaching to these lower forms is purely relative; that they are good only in subserviency to some external power; while human goodness is absolute and infinite being self-centred, or flowing from within the subject.

Nature, and man so far as he is involved in nature, that is in all his passional and intellectual life, is finite, is imperfect, is passive to a foreign will, and hence does not express the per-

fect or infinite life. When you investigate or compare with your intelligence a flower, a horse, an eagle, or any fact whatever of nature, you perceive that it is not self-centred, that its end or object does not lie within itself, that it is therefore destitute of any inward selfhood or individuality, and confesses itself a merely relative existence, contingent upon the coexistence of other things. You will perceive that the flower, the horse, or whatsoever the thing may be, has no deeper life than that of its nature, is an unmixed subject of its nature, and has no inward or ideal selfhood capable of restraining and controlling its natural one.

It is this superficiality of nature, this destitution of an inward individuality, characterizing all her offspring, which places them at an infinite remove from man, and forbids us accordingly to conceive of them as adequate forms or subjects of the supreme life. The only adequate form or subject of that life is the human, because its goodness being self-involved, that is, proceeding from a selfhood within and superior to the natural one, is absolute and unconditioned upon circumstances. It is this distinction or supremacy of the human form, which justifies us in saying that the highest goodness and wisdom are not conceivable in any other form. In short it is the inseparable alliance between the human form and the highest conceivable goodness which constrains us always to

conceive of God as perfect man, and to deny any spiritual or angelic existence which is not primarily and intensely human.

But now manifestly if God's perfection be human, it follows not only that man is the true creature of God, but also that the whole lower creation, or whatsoever is beneath man, must also be involved in him and express him. Man being the true creature or image of God, his empire must needs be universal. He must necessarily constitute the measure of all the inferior things of the universe. He must be the master key which shall fit all the wards of the lower creation, and make its mysteries intelligible. Hence men of the profoundest scientific culture do not hesitate to assume the existence of an exact correspondence between man spiritually viewed, viewed in his affections or passions and his intellect, on the one side, and the entire phenomena of the visible universe on the other. They say that the various order which we behold in nature, the distribution of her kingdoms and her tribes and families, the succession of her seasons, and the grand choral procession of her forces out of brute chaos and confusion into exact scientific symmetry and adjustment, do but typify the invisible things of man's spirit: and that consequently when the face of nature has put on her most human expression, that is to say, when science shall have developed all her resources of

use and ornament to man, then man shall see himself spiritually reflected in her, whether in all the unfathomable depth of his affections, or all the pomp and starry splendor of his intelligence, as he now sees his outward person reflected in a glass.

However, I can only glance at this sublime truth here. I desire merely to indicate in a general way the ground on which I feel myself authorized to treat the fact of Property as a symbol or correspondence of some great feature of human destiny, some great feature of the perfect man. This ground, as you have seen, is the perfection of the Creator. The creative perfection is such as to require that man alone should image it, and to impress upon all inferior natures consequently the badge of strict subjection to him. Hence we look upon the universe of nature as simply expressive of man, or expect to find in his spiritual destiny and completion, the justification and reason of every event in nature or history.

Having settled this point, let us resume the thread of our inquiry, and ascertain the precise symbolism of Property. We may be very sure that this immense fact of Property, which has given rise to almost all the institutions of society, and been in fact the impelling force of all history, has a corresponding symbolic intensity. We may be very sure that it covers some very momentous fact

of human destiny, some instinct as profound and deathless as the human soul.

Accordingly I am led by a rational inquisition to conclude, that Property symbolizes the perfect sovereignty which man is destined to exercise over nature. All the prestige which surrounds it, all the influence it exerts, springs from its symbolic or representative virtue, consists in the fact of its representing that complete lordship of nature which man is destined one day to realize. The opening page of the Mosaic cosmogony tells us that the divinely appointed destiny of man was to subdue the earth to himself, and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the face of the earth. Now God we know is a spirit, inappreciable to the senses of man, and only ideally or inwardly conversant with him. We are bound accordingly to look upon this Mosaic statement as implying not that any audible voice came to any literal ear enjoining this destiny, but rather that such is the dictate of man's inward spirit, such the temper of mind which God begets in him, to subdue the whole realm of the outward and finite to himself, to the service of his proper individuality, and so vindicate the truth of his infinite origin.

The reason why man is obliged to *subdue* the earth to himself, the reason why God cannot confer sovereignty by word of mouth or other mechanical

method, is, that all true sovereignty is inwardly generated. It is never imposed upon a person from without by the deed of another, but grows up from within, is a sovereignty of genius. It is never mechanical, but always rational, proceeding from an exact ratio or adaptation between superior and inferior. Besides, God is a spirit without any finite natural continent or body, and He cannot therefore communicate any gift to man in an outward way, but only in an inward way, or through the man himself. In short the *conditio sine qua non* of His doing anything for man, is the endowment of man's selfhood, the imparting to him a selfhood which shall be exactly proportionate to His own, which shall be instinct with all power.

But how shall man know himself thus endowed or instinct with divine power? He does not see God, nor has he any intuition of the divine intention. How then shall he know himself in his true nature, or become aware of the omnipotence which he embosoms? Evidently only by seeing it outwardly reflected. *It is only as nature or the realm of the outward reflects man's essential perfection, or sensibly demonstrates it, by becoming itself freely subservient to the uses of his life, that he becomes rightly conscious of himself, or is made aware of the exhaustless divinity he embosoms.*

Man knows and can know nothing of the facts of his inner or spiritual being, until they become

reproduced in nature, until they become fixed or embodied in act. We know nothing in respect either to the nature or the intensity of our passions until they become developed in action. No one knows the sentiment and life of Love in his own bosom by intuition, but only as some outward occasion arises for its exhibition. No one knows the force of the parental sentiment, save as it is called into consciousness by intercourse with his children. Nor does any one know the reach and subtilty of his intellect, until some outward struggle of truth and error has evoked the evidence. And all this for a very good reason, namely, that power, no matter of what sort, has no passive existence, has no existence apart from performance. Power in other words is purely active. It is never power save in producing. You may say for example, that A has greatly more powerful passions that B. But in making this judgment you do not mean to intimate that A has a greater material bulk of passion than B, but only that his passions are more influential upon his action. The measure of a passion's intensity is the control it exerts upon action. *His* passions are the most potent who is most impelled to action by them. Power is by no means contingent upon bulk. In fact it is impaired by it. Daniel Lambert added six hundred pounds to the avoirdupois of ordinary humanity. Daniel was not therefore six hundred times more a man,

but rather six hundred times less, because his excessive obesity hindered his proper manly activity, translating his preposterous *corpus* into a virtual and premature corpse.

Hence then it is that man's destiny requires him to *subdue* the earth. His final self-consciousness, his true self-knowledge, and in that his true knowledge of God, is dependent on it. He can never truly know himself, nor the divinity which animates him, until his inward or essential sovereignty becomes outwardly demonstrated, until it ceases to be merely a logical truth, and becomes a fact of sensible experience, through the advance of positive science. Thus his finite natural experience—his experience of good and evil, and the struggle thence imposed—is a *necessary basis* for his perfect self-knowledge. His finite experience is by no means the ground or basis of his *being;* it is not, in other words, what gives him a selfhood, but only what gives him *a knowledge of that infinite and omnipotent selfhood which he has eternally in God.* By the antagonism which nature presents to him, by the stringent limitation it imposes upon him, he is stimulated or piqued into incessant self-assertion, is evermore thrown back upon the instincts of his inward infinitude, until finally the veil of the temple is rent from top to bottom, and the holy of holies stands suddenly revealed in the lineaments of an immaculate and omnipotent humanity.

Now Property as an institution of human society expresses or grows out of this instinct of sovereignty in man. While the instinct is as yet misunderstood or unrecognised by the individual, while its full issues are as yet unimagined by him, society lends all her force to educate it under this form of an aspiration after property, or a desire to appropriate to oneself land, houses, money, precious stones, and whatsoever else evidences one's power over nature. From the beginning of history, society has known no other function than this, the conservation of the right of private property against the encroachments of merely natural might. Society is the bulwark which human instinct erects against the forces of outward nature. It is the weapon by which man subdues nature to himself, to the service of his proper infinitude. Look at the moral law for example which lies at the basis of society, and you immediately perceive that its operation is to impose limits upon natural desire, or forbid it invading the bounds of neighboring property. It says to every man thou shalt not take, nor even desire or covet, anything that is thy neighbor's. Thus the moral law is nothing more nor less than an affirmation of the sacredness of private property. It virtually asserts an individuality in man superior to that conferred by his nature. Hence, as I said before, the sole function of society from the beginning has been to guard

the interests of property, or elevate human life above the condition of a mere natural community, a mere community of natural interests.

Let my meaning be clearly understood. I say that the entire aim and business of society hitherto has been to guard the interests of property, or to discriminate sharply between might and right. And I further say that the reason why society makes this discrimination, the reason why it has so jealously espoused the interests of private property, is, that property has always symbolized man's destined sovereignty over nature, of which sovereignty society or fellowship among men is the indispensable means or instrument. You all know that either of you individually would be totally incompetent to the subjugation of nature; that all your present enjoyment of its bounties, the food you eat, the raiment you put on, the house you live in, the streets and roads you traverse, the tools you use, the books you read, the words you employ for the expression of your feelings and thoughts, are all the outgrowth of an organized fellowship or society among men. You will easily understand me therefore when I say that man's destined sovereignty over nature can never come about except by society, that society or fellowship among men is its indispensable means, or instrument.

Property then symbolizes this destined sover-

eignty. But here you may ask, "why *symbolizes* it? Why may not Property be a final fact itself, symbolizing nothing? You yourself showed a little while ago how universally men respected it? Why therefore should it not end in itself, having no ulterior significance?"

The answer is plain. Men are *ashamed* of the respect they pay it. Property cannot be a final fact of history, cannot be a good in itself, cannot be a divine end in humanity, because every man in proportion to his inward culture, in proportion to his genius, is ashamed of the deference he pays it. He feels this deference to be a mere trick of his servile and scullion nature, and inwardly or individually renounces it every time it recurs. The fact is that it is only among the lowest persons intellectually, persons in whom the sensuous imagination predominates, that you find any open profession of respect for it left. Among slaves, in fact among negroes as a class, and among the retainers of great families, in short among all persons in whom self-respect has never been developed or fostered, it still exerts an unrebuked dominion. But there it stops. No man of refinement allows it any indulgence.

But there is another reason why private property cannot be considered a final fact of humanity. And this is that in proportion to its magnitude, it

tends to belittle the possessor by overlaying his true sovereignty, his true humanitary attributes.

A man of very large possessions, unless he has come into them by inheritance, is almost wholly absorbed by them. Instead of being rendered free and careless, his life is a perpetual servitude. His whole energy becomes demanded by the care of his property, while he himself gradually lapses from unqualified manhood into the mere man of money. I believe from information that one of the richest men in town superintends the daily progress of his children in education, and reads Homer with his boys in the original. But he inherited his property. He who made it had notoriously little time for Homer, or any other elegant accomplishment. Now clearly no one can suppose that to be a final good, or a good in itself, which the more it is possessed becomes a burden to the possessor, and the more it is prized becomes a degradation to him.

As a general thing therefore we may say, the larger the possessions the smaller the man. The more luggage a man has with him, the greater we may conclude is his distance from home. Hence Jesus of Nazareth, who alone in his history has affirmed the essential divinity of man, not as a dogma but as a practical truth pregnant with incalculable consequences to the kingdoms of this world, staggered the fairest pretenders by his

searching criticism. On one occasion, we find a young man adorned with every moral excellency fitted to attract the love of Jesus, presenting himself before him with a view to ascertain how he should achieve everlasting life. Jesus told him to sell all that he had, or to abandon all his possessions, and follow him. But the youth drew back sorrowful, because his possessions were very great. Whereupon the Christ uttered his famous reflection upon the difficulty those who were rich must encounter in entering the divine kingdom.

Clearly they who stop in the letter here will be grievously mistaken. They who see no riches more dangerous than money, have yet to learn the alphabet of Christianity. It is not our pecuniary possessions but our moral ones chiefly, that play the traitor to our manhood. When I stand remarkably well with my fellows for piety and good morals, it is extremely hard for me to believe that the divine life will not pay a greater deference to me than to one who is completely destitute of such standing. But it is a great mistake, a mistake fatal to true manhood. Doubtless I deserve greatly better at the hands of society, of society as at present constituted, than my antagonist, because I support all her institutions. And society actually gives me my deserts, pronounces me an eminently good man. But if I thereupon suppose that this moral wealth of mine, extremely valuable

as it may be for the maintenance of an imperfect social condition, is going to further my upward success, is going to give me any God-ward advantage over thieves and harlots, I simply mistake a fundamental feature of the divine perfection, which is to be thankful for nothing. The Deity gives us all things in giving *Himself* to us, in giving us a selfhood, and hence He takes it as a doubtful compliment when any one attempts to eke out that gift, or make it more resplendent by the contrast of another's natural or moral infirmity.

Yes, no external property of any sort is sacred in itself, is otherwise than representatively sacred. It is not merely my material possessions which belittle my manhood, it is my moral ones also, the moment I begin to claim a property in them. The moment I begin to prize my moral attainments, or felicitate myself on my benevolence, my honesty, my candor, etc., and to feel a superiority in these respects to others, I begin to retrograde from the divine kingdom, and decline from the perfect hope of man. Why should this be so? Why should no man thank God for his moral differences from other men, any more than his physical or material ones?

The reason is, briefly stated, that man himself is the supreme fact, and not any mere quality or accident pertaining to him. The wealthy man, the good man, the sympathetic man, the handsome,

wise, or polite man, are no doubt important personages enough, very important personages in an imperfect state of society. But being persons merely, that is, finite or relative existences, they have no meaning to God's regard, but only to ours, who see in part and not completely. We do not read that God makes any of these men, either the good or the evil man, either the handsome or the plain man, either the rich or the poor man. They are the progeny exclusively of an immature society, of an imperfect natural development. But we read that he makes man himself unqualified by any of these antagonisms, man the image and tabernacle of His own perfection, and not these transient and accessory or mediatory persons. Hence it is that we always blush at praise whether for our moral or physical excellence. When a man is complimented upon his physical or moral superiority to others, he blushes, because a divine voice whispers him that he and all men are inwardly superior to these external differences, and that to accept praise therefore for them is to be forgetful of himself.

Man is essentially above praise, because being God-made, being God-informed, to use a scholastic expression, he is really above all appreciation. View him on his natural and social side, and I grant you that he is impotent and tawdry enough. But this is his accidental or adventitious side, not his

essential one. The infinite goodness, the infinite wisdom and power, which we call God, constitute his essential or permanent side, and hence we have only to postulate the complete subjection of nature and society to him, to understand that his righteousness will eclipse the splendor of the noon-day sun. Eternity only will suffice to reveal the perfection which dwells in him. To be man therefore is to be virtuous and beautiful. Virtue is only a classical name for manhood. The two words mean the same thing, and no virtue exists which humanity does not imply. Why then should you superfluously praise me for being virtuous and graceful, since humanity supposes these things?

We always rejoice indeed, but we are never surprised at any supernatural traits in man. We never enter the omnibus or steamboat, without expecting to be dazzled by some lustrous divinity whose glance makes golden the common air; and we never read of disaster or revolution in human affairs without expecting a new exhibition of magnanimity in man. Why is this, except that these things are his rightful heritage, the inevitable ornaments of his manhood? Some excellent moralist has said, that no woman had a right to be plain: which is true enough. Her nature entitles her to be beautiful only, and where it is freely operative will always render her so. Never yet saw any one beauty in woman which was not purely womanly,

and therefore impersonal. The person who reveals it joyously feels herself to be merely the priestess of this sacred flame, and shrinks from all personal property in it, from all private identification with it, as from sacrilege. So also no man has a right to be mean and trivial. His essential perfection or infinitude entitles him only to be manly, and when he falls short of this we may be sure that his inward amplitude is still prejudiced by the necessities of his outward position.

Property then, Property of an adventitious sort, Property which can be acquired and alienated, is only a transient good, is but the symbol or shadow of a higher good, namely, man's inherent sovereignty over nature.

But here some one may say, "if this be the case and man's sovereignty over nature is destined one day to be perfect or universal, why do we find such inequalities in the symbol, why do we find one man having large possessions, and another man small? For example, my next door neighbor has more money than he knows how to use, while his neighbor again on the other side has scarcely enough to supply his daily necessities. Now if the symbol be true, it must be true universally, and I should accordingly like to know the law of this inequality."

Precisely: nor is there any difficulty in your doing so, provided first of all that you rightly

apprehend the real ground of man's sovereignty over nature.

The sole ground then of our sovereignty over nature, is inward, consisting in a God-inspired selfhood, a selfhood instinct with infinite power. It does not consist in our moral or physical attributes, in any merely personal difference we exhibit to other men, but simply in the fact that God, or the infinite, is within us the source of our strength, and the pledge of our unlimited glorification. I may be as beautiful as Apollo, as chaste as Diana, as wise as Minerva: nature takes no note of the fact. The same lot exactly happens to me and my physical or moral opposite. For all these gifts fall within the scope of nature and society. Nature laughs when you cry up your Apollos as miracles of beauty, feeling her womb teem with unborn Apollos that shall turn these miracles into oblivion. Society too laughs at your saints, at your miracles of continence and fidelity, for she feels herself big with a progeny who shall one day be chaste without effort, and noble without knowing it.

All conscious virtue is spurious, because it demands the background or antagonism of vice to define it. It cannot therefore stand the final fire, the fire which is even now purifying all things. Consciousness means limitation or imperfection. I become self-conscious only by means of the physical limitations which divide me from thee, and the social

limitations which divide mine from thine. When I am really living, when I am obeying the full tide of life which pours into me from the inward sphere, I lose my self-consciousness, I feel only my intense unity with all men, with all things that have life. I do not now feel the separation which nature makes between me and thee, or which society makes between mine and thine. I feel only the profound and boundless unity which God makes between me and whatsoever else that lives and moves and has its being in Him. But when I cease thus to live, when nature and society overpower for a time the divine inspiration, and I sit down coolly to report myself to another, or simply to reflect myself to myself in the looking-glass of my understanding by the light of our present science, then I instantly grow conscious of all manner of limitation or littleness on every hand. Thus consciousness is not life, but only the limitation of it, only the appropriation of it to special or private ends. It is the prerogative of God alone to be without this reflective consciousness. For giving being as He does to all things, or the universe, He is of course without any limitation or antagonism, and consequently without passivity of any sort. He is creative, and to be creative is to be essentially active, or active *in se.*

All virtue therefore in proportion to its truth, all manhood in proportion to its divinity, is uncon-

scious of itself, asks no foil to make its lustre visible. True virtue or manhood is not generated reflectively or *ab extra*, but spontaneously or *ab intra* like the splendor of flowers, like the fragrance of clover. Let a perfect respect for woman become authenticated among men, authenticated by our civil institutions, and every relation of the sexes will be instantly chaste, not of constraint or effort, but of its own intrinsic sweetness. And when a perfect society or fellowship obtains among men, it will vacate all those morbid and morbific virtues which grow out of our present social dislocation, out of our present unreconciled interests. In that day man himself will be seen to be of infinitely more account than his virtues.

We cannot be too well persuaded on this point, that nature ignores all personal claims. She herself is impersonal and unitary and therefore has a thorough contempt for persons, while she preserves an unfaltering respect for man. Accordingly if we would command her unlimited service, we must do so not in our private name or quality, but in that of the Lord, in the name or quality of that unitary and divine man whom science is now revealing, and of whose dominion there shall be no end, in respect either to space or time. Let me seek to exalt myself above others, or to exalt my own fortunes above those of other men: in short let me seek any mere private and external end, and I

find nothing but impediments in nature and society. In order to accomplish it, suppose for example the end be political distinction, I am obliged to cultivate an infinite dexterity, to stoop and fawn and flatter, and keep my peace or speak, and sit down or rise up, not according to my inward wants but according to an outward bidding, the bidding of this paltry ambition, which even if I attain it will only curse me with its incessant and inseparable provocations to envy and misrepresentation.

But when I act towards an inward or unitary end, when I intend simply to express in whatever form you please that infinite good, that perfect truth, that divine beauty which constitutes the very soul or life of humanity, then nature and society fully conspire how best to empower me, then look and gesture, speech and manners, then the whole wealth of nature and all the resources of our social culture, eagerly run together to ensure me a complete success. It is only the sceptre of this divine or perfect man that nature and society recognize, the man who has no outward or mercenary end to achieve, but is simply intent upon living up to his own ideal, or obeying the infinite divinity he finds within his soul. In the outward and representative sphere of Art, this truth has long been recognized. All the personal or private sanctity men have ever contrived will

not cure a tooth-ache, and society makes a far lowlier obeisance to the inventor of the spinning-jenny, or the author of the Muck Manual, than to all the saints of the Romish calendar *plus* if you please all those of the Greek.

Such is the ground of our sovereignty or dominion over nature. It lies not in our finite or differential attributes, but solely in the fact of our essential divinity, in the fact that God gives us being.* It is our essential or divine selfhood which nature and society conspire to honor, that selfhood which primarily consists not in any stupid

* Some one may ask, does not God give being to nature also? Doubtless, only not directly but through man; not as an end but as a means. Nature's being is subordinate or tributary to man's. Hence we find man alone capable of supersensuous ideas, capable of acknowledging God or the Infinite Life. The reader is referred for further light on this subject to a subsequent paper on the Laws of Creation. I will only observe here that man organically considered is—to use an expression of Swedenborg—the *complex* of all natural forces. Thus on his material side he is neither mineral, vegetable nor animal, but the complex unity of these things. On his spiritual side he is neither serpent nor dove, neither lamb nor tiger, neither good nor evil, but the exact and orderly unity of these things. Accordingly man is rather the continent of nature than contained in it. All lower or simple things exist only to base his infinite complexity, or hold the mirror to his majestic unity. It is of course this supremacy of the human form over all the forms of nature which fits it for the divine inhabitation, or makes it responsive to those ideas of infinite goodness and truth which constitute the presence of God within us.

little differences, moral or physical, between us and others, but in our positive worth, our genius so to speak, or faculty of ideal action.

Now genius, or the power of ideal action in man, is we know, anything but uniform. It is indefinitely multiform. It varies like the countenance of man. All our theories of education presuppose in every man a particular destiny, an aptitude to some special action, the development of which constitutes his best education. No one conceives that the divine resources are so meagre as to admit of identical creations, of the same creature being repeated. No one doubts that in every person existing there is a special aptitude to some divine end if we could only get at it, a special potency for some beautiful function which no other person embodies so highly. To doubt this would be to doubt the divine Love, would be to suppose that it did not design its creatures for harmony, but for perpetual antagonism. For the more things resemble each other, the more truly discordant they are, or the more they stand in each other's way. Take all the race that have ever been born, and you will find no two exactly the same in their physical conformation. They have all a natural resemblance, but you will find no two who cannot easily be distinguished on a slight scrutiny. So of their intellectual and moral structure, while a general affinity of pursuits and tendencies characterizes

them, you will find no two who have exactly the same thoughts or the same affections. And consequently when every man is thus superficially and interiorly himself, and not any one else, he must also be inmostly himself, that is to say his genius or power must be distinctive, must be individual. He must have a special divine endowment adapted to his passional, his intellectual, and physical diversities from other men, and this endowment is precisely that thing which a true education would seek to discover and develope.

Of course then we must expect infinite diversities of endowment among men, infinite varieties of genius or power ranging from that of the highest seraph to that of the humblest clod. But all will be linked together in a perfectly human unity. Some persons will exhibit a subtler genius, some a coarser, but all alike will be expressive of humanity. Take for an illustration the unity which binds together the extremely diverse forces of the human body. The nails upon my fingers, or the hairs upon my head are very poorly organized in comparison with my eye, and the resultant life of my body derives consequently greater proportionate volume from the one than from the other. Nevertheless the body is as little entire without finger nails, or a covering of hair for the head, as it is without eyes.

Just such a gradation or variety marks the unity

of humanity. Some men exhibit grander, some humbler, abilities. Some are comparatively as the eye, drinking in the glories of earth and heaven, and transmitting an impression of refined delight to the whole body; while others are comparatively as the finger nails, or the indurated skin of the hands and feet, protecting the body rather than enlivening it, blunting the nervous sensibility to foreign contact rather than increasing it, and in this function realizing the fulness of life and honor. All power is divine the least as much as the greatest. These differences attach not to the power itself, but to the limited vision which contemplates it. No one who perceives the coarse integument of his body called the skin to be absolutely indispensable to the subsistence of the finer tissues within, will despise the rudest forms of life, the coarsest forms of human action. In the coming social state, that state which is even now bursting upon our horizon, we read that "the last shall be first and the first last." That is to say, we shall have a new order of saints, no longer the mere man of passion or of intellect, but the man of action; no longer the starved sentimentalist intent upon a prospective salvation which cannot be endangered even by his own silly solicitude, but the rich and ripe and glowing man who best promotes the future by putting the amplest possible energy into the present.

Here then we see the reason why Property, considered as the type of human sovereignty, as the symbol of man's dominion over the outward, has yet been so unequally distributed. For the ground of his dominion being genius, being divine power, he of course will find the widest recognition both of nature and society whose genius is most conspicuous, or exhibits itself in the most universal form. Every one when human society is ripe, will receive an outward homage exactly proportionate to the measure of his genius, or his capacity of ideal action. And the inequalities of existing Property simply attest this fact. It is by no means a fortuitous thing that human history presents us such extreme contrasts as it does, that we see one outwardly rich and another outwardly poor. In this history simply obeys its great end, or symbolizes the hierarchical distribution of society consequent upon its complete evolution. For human society is an infinite or perfect hierarchy, in which each member is sacred with an equal though various sacredness. It is like the human body, in which the head, the trunk and the limbs occupy positions of different dignity according to the variety of their powers, but are alike essential to the integrity of the body. It is precisely this hierarchical distribution of society at its culmination, which has shaped the course of history, and

given rise to all the contrasts we see in the outward fortunes of mankind.

But here I am met by another inquiry. I am asked, "what in this state of things will prevent envy among men? What will prevent a humbler member of the social body coveting a more eminent position than his genius entitles him to?" The answer is very obvious, if you will take the trouble to refer for a moment to the source of envy among men.

The source of envy is always arbitrary privilege. It is always inflamed by some purely conventional superiority allowed one person over others. You never envy the power or genius of another; you envy him some special outward advantage or privilege he enjoys. You do not envy Jenny Lind her power of song; you only envy her the grasp it has given her upon the public attention, the independent social position it has achieved for her, a position not a whit less enjoyable to you as you perceive, not a whit less suited to your nature than to hers. A envies B the wealth which commands so many luxuries forbidden to him. Take away his destitution of these things, and envy immediately ceases. He does not wish to deprive B of wealth, but he sees no reason why B only should possess it; he sees no reason in the nature of things why B should be rich and he poor. They have similar natural wants, they have equal

social sympathies and tastes; he sees no reason therefore why one should be free to gratify them, the other not, save mere arbitrary will, whose dominion man never will recognize because he is born for rationality and freedom. Envy therefore in these circumstances is inevitable to him. But now alter the circumstances and you alter his morality. Give him a social position as amply expressive of his wants and tastes as B's position is of his, and he will dismiss all envy.

It is a simple absurdity to suppose a man capable of envying his fellow any thing but the social appreciation he enjoys. It is absurd to suppose one man envying another his genius or faculty of action, for this would really be to envy him his individuality, which I take to be a contradiction in terms. The man whose faculty is developed, whose genius is recognized, and who has an appropriate social position, consequently, never envies another. Scott does not envy Mozart, nor does Mozart envy Canova, nor Canova envy Kemble. For all these persons have the position which their genius entitles them to, and each therefore feels genially disposed towards all the world. But the unhoused man of genius, the man of ardent affections, the man who aspires to every graceful relation with his fellow-man, and yet feels himself forever shut out from recognition by defect of early culture and present pecuniary destitution,

how can he help burning with emulous desire, when he sees his more fortunate fellow already reaping superb harvests where he has not even begun to sow? What is the use of condemning this man? Condemnation is the fool's function. The wiser part would be to cure him, by giving his faculty of action such an education as would ensure him the exact social position his affections crave. For there is an exact proportion between one's passional and intellectual nature, and his practical power or genius, so that no one whose genius is allowed the exclusive control of his outward fortunes, can by any possibility covet a lot which is not already his.

In a true society or fellowship among men, then, envy would be impossible, because no arbitrary distinctions, no such thing as exclusive privilege, in which alone envy has its source, would exist. Why would not these things exist? Because a true society, a society scientifically organized, would confer no unequal property, no exclusive privilege upon its subjects. That is to say, a true society would guarantee to every man woman and child, for the whole term of his natural life, food, clothing, shelter, and the opportunities of an education adapted to his tastes; leaving all the *distinction* he might achieve to himself, to his own genius freely influencing the homage of his fellow-men. Where society observed this wisdom, all

envy would at once disappear. Its provender would be cut off. Remove the incitements it now finds in privilege, in arbitrary advantage, and you would no more see one man envious of another than you now see the nose envious of the ear, or the hand envious of the brain. In short let genius become the hierarchical principle, and constitute the sole measure of one's social distinction; and society would instantly become orderly. For genius (by which term all along you observe I mean nothing technical in man, but simply his power of ideal action, his faculty of acting without reference either to passion or appetite, and solely with reference to the infinite beauty, the infinite goodness and truth, which animates his soul) constitutes the real presence of God in man, and all men therefore acknowledge it with a spontaneous devotion.

How real and intense will be our worship of God, when by the right ordering of human fellowship we shall see Him revealed in all men alike from the least to the greatest! This will be the only spiritual worship of God, and the fulfilment therefore of all our mere typical or ritual worship because there will be nothing mercenary about it, because it will not be imposed from without, as by fear or prudence, but inspired from within as by spontaneous attraction. When I worship God merely as a sensuous or finite person

separated from myself in time and space, or by corporeal limitations, it is with an essentially servile feeling, with exactly the same feeling of degradation which the slave feels towards the master, who has power at any moment to lay his mighty hand upon him and crush him to the dust. Of course my hope is that God will not do so to *me* personally; but so long as I conceive Him to have the power of doing so to any one, so long as I conceive Him in any manner *capable* of inflicting death, so long as I conceive Him capable of imparting any thing but infinite life, I cannot truly worship Him. At best I am only worshipping his amiable or good-natured side, and diligently spurring my jaded faculties into all manner of fancied conformity to that.

In such relation as this to God, my worship is always calculated, interested, dramatic: never frank, spontaneous, cordial. It is always deprecatory never simply joyous: moved more by some tyrannous personal fear, or unfulfilled personal hope, than by a hearty delight in His unlimited perfection. We can never truly worship God, never worship Him in spirit and in truth, so long as we allow any antithesis or contradiction between Him and humanity, between Him and our inmost self. And we can only adequately displace the antithesis or contradiction asserted by the senses, in alleging that complete union or marriage of the

infinite and finite which is vitalized in genius, and which is celebrated in the complete subjection of nature and society to human use.

And now one final word. We have seen that Property is but a symbol, and we have seen what it symbolizes. We have seen that it symbolizes the grandest of facts, man's inherent dominion or sovereignty over nature; not any particular person's sovereignty, but the sovereignty of man as man, of man universally. Now the time is doubtless near when the symbol and the thing symbolized will come into conflict. For everywhere in all time such is the fate of symbols, to be ignorant of their due subordination, and claim to be the realities they only serve. The time therefore must inevitably come when property will assert itself to be the supreme or vital interest of man, and will command society accordingly to obey its behests rather than the great instincts of humanity. But in vain.

> "A substitute shines brightly as a king
> Until a king be by: and then his state
> Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
> Into the main of waters."

In the Old World this conflict is fully ripe. On one side is Authority, backed by all the traditions of the past save prophecy and promise, and by the armed force of the nations. On the other side is human Want, backed by all the best life and best

thought of the present, backed indeed by the infinite resources of science, as well as by man's deathless faith and hope in the future. In fact so unequal the controversy seems that we may say Governmental authority is on one side backed by purely mercenary bayonets, and Human Worth on the other backed by God Almighty or all the rational and spontaneous force of the universe.

Of course the issue in Europe is imminent. It seems as if it could hardly be delayed from day to day. But Satan, which I take to be the lawful name of the despotic principle, the principle of arbitrary authority in human affairs whether secular or ecclesiastical, may have great power allowed him yet for awhile by the exigencies of human destiny. The benign Providence which guards that destiny disdains no tools which promote its purposes, and perfectly knows how to dispose of them when their use is accomplished. It may very well be therefore that Absolutism in Church and State shall enjoy a lengthened tether for some time to come in Europe, but the end can only be to make the "round turn" by which it shall eventually be brought up, the more signally decisive.

A great dread besets the European mind, lest the people, in case of a successful insurrection against authority, should plunge into the maddest disorder, and sweep from the earth at one blow all the trophies and memorials of our past civilization.

I cannot but believe that this fear vitally wrongs the popular instincts. There is doubtless a scum and froth of society attaching to both extremes rich and poor alike, which is prone to every excess; but this would instantly disappear the moment that the true substantial manhood of both sides should be allowed to flow together in loving fraternity, by the destruction of the puny prejudices which now divide them. This scum, this froth, grows on either side out of this unhappy division. It attests the attrition of two forces which are essentially one and should know therefore no divided interests. It strikes me consequently that in any decisive uprising of the people, both sides alike would instantly unite to rid themselves of this factitious and disorderly element. The European revolution of 1848 indeed fully justified this prevision. The thief, or the destructionist of whatever sort, when refractory to counsel, was instantly shot down to show that the will of the people when freely expressed is the will of God, and tolerates no lower righteousness.

But it seems to me that there can be no just apprehension of disorder in regard to the great mass of mankind, whether rich or poor. Property is universally felt to be a prime monument and measure of man's essential divinity, marking the extent of his conquest of nature. It is so much clear gain for mankind, so much actual advance

upon primeval chaos and night. It is indeed very unscientifically distributed as yet, distributed in such a manner as to provoke incessant vice and crime: but this is because the symbol still absorbs the regard which is due only to the substance. Man's true *proprium* or property is his *selfhood*, is God within him, in other words, the inseparable fountain of his life. His natural *proprium* or apparent selfhood is simply a basis for the due manifestation of this essential one. Hence when human fellowship or society is perfect, our natural or external *proprium* will be commensurate with our inward or divine one; that is to say, the whole earth with all the resources of society will be the equal heritage of every man. Now property as a symbol or type is bound of course to obey the law of its antitype: is bound, that is, to become more and more equally distributed amongst the great mass of society. But clearly this is to be done only by the legislative application of scientific principles, and not by the brutal dissipation of the thing distributed.

Besides it is a narrow view even of external property, to suppose it identical with mere money. It is strictly true to say that the poorest man among us, who is not degraded by vicious habits, has a princely heritage compared with the Patagonian. The immense social advance which secures Mr. Astor his money, secures me also other things

much more valuable than money. The fact that society is of such a sort as to enable Mr. Astor to amass so great an estate by the sheer activity of his genius, ensures me also and all men an immense advance upon our natural beginnings, upon our original impotence and destitution. It is because society is of this sort that I am not now a squalid savage, devoid of all arts, and that my children are not bowing down before some sacred snake, or adorning the deified effigy of some beastly baboon. What I want therefore, is, not to quarrel with society for its actual achievements, or for making Mr. Astor rich and cultivated, but simply to urge it onward to greater achievements of the same sort, even to the making all men rich and cultivated, so destroying evermore covetousness and crime among them.

But however the sure issue may betide in the Old World, whether late or early, we in this blessed New World may felicitate ourselves that the conflict there going on between symbol and substance, between government and peoples, between property and humanity, is obviated for us by our democratic constitution. We have no institutions in this country which are not the offspring exclusively of the day, or of popular legislation, and which do not disavow consequently all affinity with the night of mere tradition. Thank God we know no past in this country, but are a virgin

people fresh from the hand of infinite love, sent forth to achieve an unprecedented destiny by the unprecedented method of a complete reliance upon the heart of man. All our institutions exist accordingly only by the consent of the popular heart, and must be modified therefore precisely according to its sovereign dictates, or after the pattern of the widest humanity. We tolerate all opinions and creeds, so long as they keep a shady position. But should any of them attempt to force itself into sunlight and obtain the supremacy of the others in public recognition: should any of our existing ecclesiastical sects for example claim any other than a purely democratic basis among us, claim an *authoritative* hold upon the popular respect, whether the ostensible ground of such claim be divine or human, we should only recognize in it the spawn of the primeval ignorance, and treat it with the cordial contempt it deserves.

We therefore may hold on our way rejoicing. Humanity, a divine or perfect humanity, is enthroned in our institutions, because it is enthroned in the inmost reverence of the people, and the gates of hell therefore will be impotent against them. Not any section of the people is declared sacred by our laws, but the whole people. And what the whole people want therefore our political machinery is ample to ensure. But no private voice can interpret the wants of the people. Science alone

is adequate to this ministry, and *upon the diffusion of a scientific education among the people therefore*, all true statesmen must hereafter depend. Wherever in any of our sects a distrust of education appears, we may be sure *that there is a plague-spot, which if it grow will be fatal to our liberties.* In this country the interests of humanity are supreme over all sectarian interests, and we must not hesitate to cauterize without limit whatsoever "proud flesh" may lift its unhealthy front among us.

To conclude therefore, let us remember two things: 1. Science teaches us that Property has been hitherto the supreme or leading fact of human history, because it has avouched the sacredness of human individuality. Its sacredness was never intrinsic or real, but always extrinsic and derivative, like the king's, like the priest's, arising from its representing a diviner fruit in man than his mere nature bears. For while the glory of the animal or vegetable lies in abject obedience to its nature, lies in its exhibiting its natural force in uncurbed luxuriance, it is the glory of man on the other hand to transcend *his* nature, and make it obey an individuality above itself, an individuality instinct with infinite goodness and truth.

2. The institution of private Property therefore must never be allowed to dominate, but only to serve, the interests of universal man. It has hitherto been their admirable shield and buckler:

let it not henceforth prove an incumbrance and obstruction. Rather let it rise at once to the height of its own theory, and openly vindicate the great humanitary destiny to which all its secret force is owing. For what could be nobler than for the property of the world still to maintain that foremost part in history which has hitherto been freely accorded it, and while gracefully preparing the way by every measure of enlightened legislation for the benignant issues to which it points, cover itself in dying with a real as well as symbolical lustre, by earning the boundless gratitude of multitudes ready to perish.

LECTURE III.

UNIVERSALITY IN ART.

THE PRINCIPLE

OF

UNIVERSALITY IN ART.

I DO not intend to discuss in this Lecture the principles of any specific art, or the methods of excellence it offers to its votary, for this would be a discussion to which I am wholly incompetent. I simply propose to consider the nature of Art universally, of all Art whatever be its specific manifestation, and to show what it is which makes it man's characteristic or sovereign activity.

It is very evident that Art is a universal spirit, from the circumstance of its having so many distinct manifestations. We sometimes call the painter Artist, sometimes the musician, sometimes the poet, sometimes the actor, and so forth *ad infinitum.* Now in speaking thus we virtually assign a universal empire to Art, and regard these several vocations as only so many of its particular

provinces. What I propose to do then just now, is, to state the principle of universality in Art, to state what it is which makes the poet, the musician, the sculptor, and so forth, an Artist, and so commends him to homage.

The sphere of Art properly so called, is the sphere of man's spontaneous productivity. I say his spontaneous productivity, in order to distinguish it on the one hand from his *natural* productivity, or that which is prompted by his physical necessities, and on the other by his moral productivity, or that which is prompted by his obligations to other men. Thus the sphere of Art embraces all those products of human genius, which do not confess the parentage either of necessity or duty. It covers whatsoever is produced without any external constraint, any constraint imposed by the exigencies either of our physical or social subsistence. We do not call the shoemaker an artist, because we know very well that he is animated in his vocation not by any inward attraction to it, not by any overmastering love of making shoes, but simply by the desire of making a living for himself and his family. What prompts him to work is not any spontaneous and irrepressible delight in it, any such delight as makes the work its own reward, but simply a feeling of obligation to himself and his family. He makes no shoe for the pure pleasure of making it, but because he

would so put bread into the mouths of his family. Thus his productivity, being enforced both by necessity and duty, being enforced by the necessity of providing for himself and the duty of providing for those whom society makes dependent on him, is not spontaneous or free, does not in other words obey an internal attraction, and consequently falls utterly without the sphere of Art. The shoemaker is not an Artist. He is only an Artisan or Workman.

It is evident from this analysis then that Art does not simply imply production, but production of a certain order. It implies as I have already said, spontaneous production, or production which is energised from within the producer, and not by his physical or social necessities. And now that I may remove all manner of ambiguity or obscurity from the subject let me explain to you exactly what is meant by spontaneity in man, exactly what is meant by his spontaneous action.

All action is the product of two forces or elements, one internal which we call its end or object; the other external which we call its means or subject. No action is possible unless it enjoy this double parentage, unless it proceed from a certain generative or paternal end, through a certain formative or maternal means. Here for example is an action. I place my hat on my head. This action acknowledges the congress or conjoint

parentage of two elements, one originating or begetting, the other mediating or serving: namely, 1. a desire in me to protect my head from the weather; 2. an obedient physical organization. Were it not for the first element here, which was my desire to protect my head from the weather, the second element which is my physical organization would have remained inert, and the action accordingly would not have taken place.

Now the first or propagative element of this action, is denominated its object; the second or instrumental element is denominated its subject. Such is the invariable genesis of action, that its objective element or the object *for* which the action is done, bears the relation of father to it; and its subjective element, or the means *by* which it is done, bears the relation of mother.

You perfectly perceive then that all action properly so called embodies two elements, one internal and generative which we denominate its end or object, the other external and formative which we denominate its means or subject.

Now such being the nature of all action, it is the precise peculiarity of spontaneous action that it always makes the object fall *within* the subject, that it never allows the object to lie out of or beyond the subject's self. I call this the peculiarity or distinction of spontaneous action, because both natural and moral action exhibit an exactly con-

trary order. They both place the object of the action without the subject, make the object external to the subject. When I act spontaneously the object or motive of my action lies within myself who am the subject of it: when I act simply naturally, much more when I act merely morally, the object or motive of my action lies without myself: that is to say in the one case, the object is my external physical organization; in the other case, it is my fellow-man. Let me make all this plain by an example or two.

First, take an example of natural action. Let it be the most familiar of all natural actions, that of eating or drinking. The object of this action is the gratification of a natural appetite. I do not eat or drink to gratify my private taste, but simply to satisfy a physical necessity. Thus the object of the action in this case is made external to the subject, while the subject is made internal to the object. Nature imposes this activity on me the subject, under the penalty of acute suffering. I am not at liberty to neglect it. It is a necessity of my natural existence. Hence you perceive that the objective element in the natural action of eating or drinking, is made external, and the subjective element is made internal.

It is true that I may make this natural action of eating and drinking the basis of an exquisite Art, for art being universal disdains no field of minis-

tration however humble, but avouches its redeeming virtue most in descending to what is lowly, and exalting that which is despised. It sheds a divine splendor over the meanest things, and glorifies the infinite riches of its resources in the exact ratio of the intrinsic poverty of its materials. But in this case, that is to say, when I exalt my eating and drinking into the realm of Art, the action of course ceases to be any longer merely *natural*, and so puts itself out of relation to our immediate inquiry.

Let us next take an example of moral action, and let it be the most familiar of all moral actions, that of paying a debt. Now the object of this action is the satisfaction of a social obligation. Society makes one of its members at present dependent upon another, the child upon the parent, the wife upon the husband, the poor man upon the rich one, and consequently imposes certain duties or debts upon the former towards the latter. These duties or debts must be paid under penalty of social reprobation. The child must pay the debt imposed by its state of dependence upon the parent, the wife must pay the debt imposed by her state of dependence upon the husband, and the poor man the debt imposed by his state of dependence upon the rich man. Otherwise society will go into disorder. In the case supposed to illustrate the nature of moral action, I pay a pecuniary

debt. I may do it very much against my will. That is to say, it may involve very serious embarrassment to me to part with the money. Or the creditor may have rendered himself so extremely obnoxious to me, as to destroy my good-will towards him. Nevertheless I pay him. Much as I may suffer from the payment in my domestic relations, or much as I may detest the person of my creditor, I yet feel so keenly the imperative nature of my social obligations, as promptly to discharge the debt. Thus my action becomes in the highest degree moral, or expressive of the sentiment of duty. Its object is not to gratify myself, but purely to satisfy the legal claim of another, to satisfy the claim which society gives another upon me. Thus you perceive in this case also that the object is made external, and the subject internal, which is exactly contrary to the order of spontaneous action.

It may indeed be asked whether a debt may not be paid spontaneously, whether in other words duty and taste, duty and beauty, may not be coincident? Decidedly so. In the absolute truth of things there is no variance between duty and pleasure. In the absolute truth of things, duty and taste, duty and inclination, or self-love and neighborly love are perfectly united. But man very slowly conforms to the absolute truth of things. Fully to conform to that constitutes his destiny.

The whole of his social history is a gradual approximation to this conformity. For society, or the phenomenon of human fellowship, is bent upon solving no other problem but this, so to adjust the relations of man to man, as that no possible conflict may exist between our public and private interests, between the obligation I am under to myself, and that which I am under to my fellow-man.

But in the immaturity or infancy of society, while human fellowship is not yet suspected of claiming a scientific basis, of having as fixed a law as that which governs the harmonies of the planets, the private and public interests of mankind are very inadequately adjusted. Then very often an organized inequality obtains between these elements. Then very often legalized injustice takes place. In this state of things it may often be a man's duty to do things which are exceedingly onerous to him, which viewed absolutely are extremely unjust. For example, suppose me to possess the wealth of the late Mr. Girard, and you to be a poor laborer living on my land. Now clearly it is a very unjust thing viewed absolutely that you should be made to pay out of your humble and hard earnings an annual stipend to me, an annual augmentation of my already excessive wealth, for the bare privilege of living. Yet it is your moral duty to do so, the duty you owe soci-

ety, and society is bound by the interests of its present existence to suspend its favor to you upon your submissive performance of it. Of course you are guilty of no injustice in paying me my annual tribute, nor am I guilty of any in exacting it. But society is guilty in perpetuating these unequal relations among its subjects when their iniquity is manifest, and will never know accordingly any lasting repose or dignity, until it demands of science the means of perfectly redressing them.

Thus I say that at the present time a man's best morality may be very unspontaneous, may be dictated purely by the dread of social penalties, instead of the divine sentiment of justice or fitness. And such a condition of morality of course imposes upon the subject a purely outward end or object, makes him obey not an inward and divine inspiration, but a purely sensual prudence or expediency. I indeed fulfil and intend to fulfil my pecuniary and other obligations in the most punctual manner, because both my active sympathy with my fellow-man, and my intense conviction of the inappreciable worth past present and future of society, forbid me ever putting myself in a hostile attitude towards it. But viewing our pecuniary relations apart from these sanctions, or in themselves, I cannot say that they appear very beautiful or precious. One's pecuniary transactions do not often seem to be an outward and visi-

ble sign of an inward and invisible grace. I very often pay money with an inward reluctance, and I receive it with a decided qualmishness, putting the amount in my pocket under cover of many voluble inquiries about the weather, and the state of the political barometer. I should be greatly better satisfied in every case, if no debt existed either to pay or to be paid. I should be greatly better satisfied if society would ordain such clean relations amongst its members, as that every office of service I render to my fellow might date from the heart and not merely from the head, or as that my morality might measure my infinite good-will to others, rather than my consummate prudence. When I go to pay my house-rent, I leave all my human love at home with my wife and children, and come into purely inhuman relation with my payee. I hurry into his presence and hurry out, careless of the thousand noble qualities which may glow in his bosom, or animate his voice, because all these things are overlaid and defaced by the spurious and unequal relations established between us. Every one would be greatly happier if being brought into the world without his own consent, he might be permitted to live in it without the continual consent of somebody else. Each of us would be greatly happier if his relations to others were so scientifically adjusted, as that every one would stand ready when he came into the world

to endow him with cradles, and nurseries, and schools, and shoes, and coats, and breeches, and breakfast, and supper, and lodging, and whatever else makes life comfortable, and thus leave him free to do only the special work which God empowers him to do.

But this is a sad digression. In endeavoring to discriminate moral action from spontaneous action I have been tempted somewhat beyond the strict limits of my subject, to which I now return. My object was to shew you that moral and physical action, all that sort of action which is enforced by our finite circumstances, by physical and social penalties, differs from spontaneous action in this, that it makes man's object external to him instead of internal, while spontaneous action exactly reverses this order. And I wished to bring this discrimination before you only in order that I might have your intelligent appreciation when I proceed to say that *invention* supplies all the requisites of spontaneous or æsthetic action, when I proceed to say for example that the man who *invents* shoes is an Artist, while the man who only makes shoes is not.

Invention fulfils all the conditions of æsthetic activity. A work of Art is that which is complete in itself, which involves its own end, or presents the perfect unity of object and subject. Thus in the case in question—the invention of shoes—the

human feet are unclad. They need a protection against the elements, but such a protection as shall not impair the natural vigor and freedom of the foot. Now in performing this work, my object, or that which generates and governs my activity, is a certain idea or conception within my own mind. If the result perfectly express this idea or mental conception, the work will be complete in itself, will be a work of Art. The shoe may not fit any actual foot of man, yet this circumstance will not affect its æsthetic merit. My design was not to fit a shoe to a particular foot: that is the business of the shoemaker or artisan: but to give outward form or body to an inward idea. If I do this, then I have done a perfect work, a work of Art, whether the actual result be or be not available to a particular use.

Now what the artisan or shoemaker does, is merely to adapt my invention to a particular foot. He seizes the universal idea to which I have given embodiment, and applies it to a specific use. He does not invent a new form; he merely moulds an existing and universal form to a particular exigency. Thus his activity is imperfect, is not complete in itself. If his shoe does not fit the foot it is intended for, it is made in vain, since it was made not for its own sake like my shoe, but for the sake of that particular foot which after all it does not fit.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to deny the existence of every degree of skill in the workman. I only mean to deny that the highest skill constitutes what men call Art. The Artist is oftentimes extremely deficient in skill, or mere executive talent; in other words he is often unhappily a very poor artisan. Talent or skill belongs to the artisan. It may abound in one man, and be extremely defective in another, so that one shall properly be called a good workman and the other a poor one. But we do not talk of a good Artist, or a poor Artist. For Art is positive, claiming a substantive majesty, and beggaring all adjectives to set forth its praise. The Artist is not the man who paints a landscape or a portrait better than any other man. It is not the man who writes a better poem, or builds a more symmetric edifice than another. It is not the man of any specific mode of industry or productive action. It is simply the man who in all these modes works from an ideal, works to produce or bring forth in tangible form some conception of use or beauty with which not his memory but his inmost soul is aglow.

Thus in estimating a work of Art, you would seek to ascertain how far its genetic idea or mental conception had been fulfilled, how far in other words the sentiment of the piece impressed you. It may be that Salvator paints trees more accu-

rately than Poussin. This proves not that Poussin was not a true disciple of Art, but only that Salvator was a better workman, a more faithful reproducer of nature. For all this Poussin may impress you with a much deeper feeling of Art than the other. His pictures may be much fuller of sentiment, may be a far ampler revelation of beauty to the soul. For Art does not lie in copying nature. Nature only furnishes the Artist with the material by means of which to express a beauty still unexpressed in nature. He beholds in nature more than nature herself holds or is conscious of. His informing eye it is which gives her that soul of beauty, that profoundly human meaning, which alone keeps her from being burdensome to the spirit. Nature *rules* only in the young and immature, only where the sensuous imagination still predominates. She is the menial of the Artist, or if that word seem too harsh, she is his nimble and airy servitor eager to do his royal bidding. She is simply the platform or theatre for the revelation of that infinite and divine beauty which dwells in the soul of man, and makes itself visible in all his spontaneous action. Hence nature should never predominate in the realm of Art, but only serve. And accordingly no one ever employs a painter to reproduce upon the walls of his chamber the actual landscape which smiles before its windows. For no one wishes to see nature merely imitated or re-

produced. He wishes to see it imaging a nobler beauty, a subtler ideal charm, than his eyes have yet beheld. Therefore he imports a foreign sky to adorn his parlors, and finds in the sunny meads and terraced cliffs of other lands, a delight unexhausted by his past experience.

If the past train of observation be just, then we may not fear to accept the definition I have given of a work of Art. It is a work which involves its own end, or is complete in itself. Art is not a term designed to express any particular mode of external activity, but simply to characterize, *throughout the whole range of human production*, that performance which obeys a purely ideal end, or represents a conception of beauty in the performer's soul. Whatever work of man does not come under this definition, whether it be painting or poetry or sculpture, falls without the sphere of Art. It may be a work of surpassing cleverness, it may greatly excel the work of every other man in the same walk, but it is not a work of Art. It is at best an unsurpassed copy of Nature, and always remains inferior to the original. Zeuxis may paint natural effects better than Apelles. He may give you such miraculous distances, and so embathe his foliage with the tender freshness of the dawn, that you would swear he knew the very heart of nature, and could utter all her secrets at will. But all this only leaves Zeuxis a painter. It by no means

makes him an Artist. For take away a certain effect from nature, and you leave him powerless. To be a first-rate painter one must be a faithful copyist of nature, as to be a first-rate poet one must be a faithful copyist of the human heart. But to be an Artist in either sphere is to do something more than copy. It is to make poetry and painting serve ideas, or express a beauty above nature and beyond the range of our private affections. Zeuxis accordingly has been a zealous student or copyist of nature. He has watched her more wistfully than the spider watches the fly. In the voluminous note-book of his memory, he has recorded all her shifting phantasmagoria, and is quite sure that he will one day seize her with a grasp which all men shall deem immortal.

But the Artist avoids all this fidget. He loves and enjoys nature, but with no sinister design. He enters the chambers of the morning for a present refreshment, and with no view to the scraps he may carry home in his wallet. He watches the lingering glance of the god of day, because it evokes a mystic rapture in his soul which no other natural symbol can, but he has not the remotest intention of reporting the transaction for the newspapers. He may of course be, as to his specific intellectual activity, a painter or a poet, and in either capacity will use these fruits of his observation with admirable advantage. All I wish to say

is that so far as he is also Artist, the inspiration of his activity will come from within and not from without, will date exclusively from a supersensuous idea, and not from the most gorgeous landscape the sun ever lighted.

It is an irreverence therefore shown to Art, a wrong done its great significance, to call a man Artist merely because he is a first-rate painter, sculptor or poet. Art has no more necessary connection with one form of production than another. It has no respect of persons. It commits itself to no specialities. It is a universal spirit manifesting itself in all forms but compromised by none. Hence the Artist knows no shibboleths, is destitute of all exclusiveness, is in fact modesty itself, feeling himself to be a mere minister and representative of that holy and divine spirit which forgives every sin but self-conceit. To give outward form to inward substance: to give natural body to spiritual conception: such is the office of Art within the entire realm of human production. Who that enters upon this lofty career, but feels his soul purified of all petty and personal ambitions, of all mercenary lusts? For his labor acknowledges no more any outward object, acknowledges no object but the fullest possible expression of beauty.

This is the exact distinction between work, or mercenary labor and Art, that the workman or artisan finds his inspiration without him, in the

necessities of his physical and social life: while the Artist finds his within him, or in his ideal. The artisan works for physical and social subsistence, thus from compulsion, and therefore poorly. The Artist works only to satisfy an inspiration, thus from attraction, and therefore divinely. His inward spirit is the exclusive source or object of his activity: his outward organization its means or instrument. Thus in so far as his activity is concerned, he is complete or perfect in himself: while the artisan who finds his inspiration without him, either in the necessities of his nature or his social position, is perpetually incomplete, like a house without an occupant, or a body without a soul.

These considerations explain why men so much dislike mere toil or compulsory work. It is servile and imitative. It is always enforced by some bodily necessity or social duty, by some exigency of one's natural or social position. Æsthetic activity, the activity of the Artist, on the other hand is free and original. It springs not from necessity or duty, but purely from taste or delight. It has an exclusively inward genesis. It proceeds from within to without. It is in every case the embodiment of an idea, and therefore complete in itself. Thus the Artist, the man who is striving to actualize an idea, inevitably feels a sense of human dignity or worth to which the mere paid laborer is a stranger.

This is the reason why merely mechanical or ritual labor is not loved. It is not that one may not have a genius or attraction for that sort of occupation, for such is not the case. Louis XVI. passed his sunniest hours this side the scaffold in his little workshop, fashioning locks of every pattern, and there is scarcely any of us but delights occasionally to enact the carpenter within his own cupboard, and even supersede the tailor in respect to a deficient button or so. It is only that these occupations are usually enforced by necessity. One's genius prompts a wholly free resort to them as to all other occupations, and when one is held to them therefore without any intermission by the necessities of his actual subsistence, he feels that his human instincts are violated.

Mechanical occupations are in themselves as respectable as any other. Mechanics themselves embody probably a larger measure of human worth than any other class of the community, both because they are the largest in point of numbers, and because they have not the same temptations to self-conceit, or an undue estimate of themselves, as the others. Indeed when I recur to my own memory for its best illustrations of solid manly worth, of true human sweetness, it refers me to individuals of this class. But our unintelligent society does not bear this in memory. It fixes its regard upon the fact that mechanical

occupation is usually enforced by necessity, and hence refuses to bestow the honor upon the tailor or shoemaker which it bestows upon the painter or sculptor. Doubtless society acts herein with an instinct wiser than its wisdom, by way of stimulating the masses not to a disgust of their occupations which are in themselves full of honor, but to a *disgust of the actual servitude they are under to these occupations*, and an effort consequently to better their social position. In this point of view we may amply justify the temporary social inferiority of the mechanic to the clergyman and lawyer; but the fact of that inferiority is undeniable. What clergyman, what lawyer, invites his carpenter to dine with him and meet Lord Morpeth, who very possibly might more relish such a guest than such a host? No, society will allow none of her members to remain content with enforced or mercenary labor. She will goad him with incessant slights and sarcasms, until he compels her to lift him also above this accursed necessity of earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. So true is this, that if by chance a lucky investment in real estate makes his descendants rich and leaders of fashion, society is sure to visit them with a perpetual recurrence to the ancestral waxend, or at least a very frequent prick of the paternal needle.

No, talk as we may on gala days, we all of us

hate compulsory labor, labor which the body lays upon the soul, because it does not express the true order of human life, does not express that inward and divine force which is the proper glory of man, and which reveals itself only in free or spontaneous action, action that descends from the soul to the body. In his profoundest soul every man rebels against the servitude of his body, and the servitude of society. It takes whips and dungeons and gibbets and a ceaseless army of men affirming the terrors of a vindictive future, to keep him to it, or prevent his supplying his wants in a more summary way. And after all, as we see in the Old World, this expensive machinery does its work very ineffectually. For human individuality is the very citadel of God's omnipotence, and you can no more repress its blind and perverse manifestations by penal statutes, than you can tame the electric current by a vote of the common council, or an expression of the public indignation. This fluid has from the beginning been at bottom full of friendliness towards you, and it has toppled your steeples, and burned your barns, and devastated your sideboards, for no other purpose than to compel your attention, and force you to provide it a safe conduct to the hungry and exhausted earth. So the mightier force of human individuality has resorted to eccentric and explosive methods,

only by way of compelling society to do it tardy justice, by furnishing it suitable *media* for the display of its inmost and essential innocence.

The position of the *technical* Artist in past history confirms the statement I have made in a very perfect manner. The votary of what we call the *fine* arts, those arts which have the service of ornament for their end, has had a much higher conventional rank than the votary of the useful arts. Painters, poets, sculptors, actors, story-tellers, have been the chosen companions of kings and nobles. All saloons have been open to them, and even the inflexible canons of morality have been freely suspended in their behalf. Such has been the lot of these men, not because of any personal superiority in them to other men, but simply because their special activity revealed a deeper glimpse of destiny than was commonly apprehended. As against the complete subjection to nature and society which the hard toil of the masses declared to be the lot of man, this artistic activity perpetually opened up the fountains of the ideal in him, and visited him with gleams and promises of an inward divinity so radiant and refreshing as to make the base outward itself comparatively tender and tolerable. For this service these men reaped a consideration to which on personal or moral grounds they could have no title. Personally they have very often proved downright social nuisances, full of affecta-

tion, full of self-conceit, full of selfishness, full of petty malignity toward rival aspirants.

Surely then it is not for his own sake that the technical Artist has been honored, but purely for his sacerdotal or representative function. He has been the priest, in his sphere, of a higher worship than mankind has yet realized, and therefore men have done him honor. In the sphere of labor, in the sphere of production, he has revealed a more humane law of action for man than utility or duty, even taste or attraction, and hence only it is that men have canonized him. It is never the actual worth of what he does in point of talent that men care about, for the painter, sculptor, poet and musician have not been remarkable for general ability. Still less is it the moral worth of his performance, or its relation to established public sentiment, that wins the Artist esteem, for the poorest pictures in the eye of a connoisseur are precisely those which are fullest of didactic intention, those which daringly prostitute the universality of nature to purposes of sycophancy, to the service of established opinions, to the flattery of the powers that be. For if a man should embody the pictorial skill of every painter from Apelles to Turner, and yet propose nothing more than the illustration of existing public sentiment, than the vindication of the current morality, he would instantly confess himself a mere *terræ filius* unvisited by one ray of the true

Apollo. In fact whatever be his executive talent or craftsmanship, if he propose anything at all in his performances but the bare revelation of a humanitary idea or sentiment, a sentiment which knows no statute-books, and is unconfessed in any catechism, and is the appanage of no persons, but in truth pervades the universe like a vital Deity deluging the soul with unexpected enchantments, he falsifies his mission, offers up strange fire which Art has not commanded, and all the academies on earth cannot shield him from a plenary damnation.

The principle of universality then in Art, or that thing which gives it a universal empire within the field of production, I find to be invention, individuality, or the power of giving outward form to purely inward conception. Every work of Art embodies an idea, and so confesses its distinctively human genesis. Art is nothing more than the shadow of humanity. To make the ideal actual in the sphere of production, in the sphere of work, is the function of the Artist. To make the ideal actual *in the sphere of life*, is the function of Man. Talent, a healthy organization, knowledge of history or of the past achievements of the race, and an intercourse with nature and society wide enough to educate him out of all local prejudice, these no doubt are indispensable conditions of the Artist's worthy manifestation, but they no

more create or give him being, than the elements of nature give being to man.

What the Artist does for us is, not to repeat some laborious dogma learned of nature or society, but to show nature and society everywhere pregnant with human meaning, everywhere pervaded by a human soul. His business in a word is to glorify MAN in nature and in men. All our sensible experience proceeds upon the fact of a unitary and therefore omnipresent soul or life within us. Were this soul or life finite like my body, were it finited by other souls as my body is finited by other bodies: were it in short an intrinsically heterogeneous soul in my body to what it is in other bodies: then all sympathy between me and universal nature would be impossible. Not only would my fellowship with man in that case obviously cease, but my eyes could no longer discern the glories of the earth and sky, nor my nose inhale the fragrance of innumerable flowers, nor my ears drink in the myriad melodies which are the daily offering of earth to heaven. For the splendor of the morning and evening landscape, the fragrance of flowers, and the melody of birds, are not substantial things having their root in themselves: they are merely masks of a certain relation between me and universal nature, of a certain unity between my soul and the soul that animates all things. The landscape is not glorious

to itself, nor the flower fragrant, nor the bird melodious; they are severally glorious, fragrant and melodious only to me. The fragrance of the rose, the splendor of the landscape, the melody of the bird, are only an overt sacrament or communion between my soul and their soul, between God in me and God in them. Because an infinite or unitary life animates all things, we never come into outward contact without our inward unity flashing forth in these delicious surprises.

Now the Artist is saturated with this sentiment of universal unity, this sentiment which binds all nature together in the unity of a man, and he ever strives to give it a perfect expression. Why does he not succeed in doing so? Why does no painter, no poet, no sculptor succeed in snatching the inmost secret of Art, and so making his name immortal?

It is because the inmost secret of Art does not lie within the sphere of Art, but belongs only to Life. Art or doing, as I have said before, is itself but a shadow of the eternal fact which is life, or action. To live or to act is more than to produce: hence the technical Artist has never succeeded and never will succeed in achieving the universal empire which belongs only to Man. The poet, painter or musician is not the perfect man, the man of destiny, the man of God, because the perfect man is so pronounced by his life or action

rather than by his production. He is not constituted perfect by any work of his hands however meritorious, but simply by the relation of complete unity between his inward spirit and his outward body, or what is better, between his ideas and his actions.

The Artist has typified the perfect man, because in the sphere of work or production he has wrought only from ideas, or from within outwards. But he has not *been* the perfect man, because in the sphere of life he has exhibited precisely the same conflict between the ideal and the actual as other men exhibit. Sometimes he has been a morally good man, and won the commendation of society; at others he has been a morally evil man and exposed himself to its reproach. But the perfect man is above both commendation and reproach. He is neither morally good nor morally evil. His goodness is infinite, being a goodness in himself, and hence all his physical and social relations must infallibly reflect it.

The two moral poles, the poles of good and evil are *alike* requisite to humanity. Neither of them by itself defines humanity. The good man by himself, or the evil man by himself no more defines humanity, than the North pole by itself, or the South pole by itself defines the earth. As the earth is defined by the north and south poles equally, so humanity is defined by the good and

evil man equally. The body of humanity lies between these two extremes, as the body of the earth lies between north and south. Accordingly if we regard the matter with some attention, we shall find that as the best fertility of the earth comprises a middle region equidistant from either pole, so the true vigor of humanity has never lain in the direction either of good simply, or of evil simply, but in a middle plane equidistant from both.

For the true vigor of humanity hitherto it will be admitted, has been displayed in a social direction, that is to say, in promoting and strengthening human society or fellowship. Now it is manifest to a glance, that society or fellowship among men could never have been promoted by the cultivation either of the good element, which is charity, to the destruction of the evil element, which is self-love; or by the cultivation of the evil element to the destruction of the good one. If charity to the exclusion of self-love, had been the policy of society, every man would have so deferred to every other, that even the comparative fellowship we now enjoy would have been forever unattainable, would in fact have argued great corruption. And if self-love to the exclusion of charity, had been the mode, every man would have so bullied every other, that fellowship would have been equally inconceivable in that way. In the one

case, suicide would have been the logical culmination of morality, would have constituted one's social apotheosis: in the other case, murder.

Society means fellowship, and fellowship means equality. Whoso is the fellow of another, is so far forth his equal. Human society, accordingly, is a state of fellowship or equality among men. The reason why equality is a legitimate state of man, is that he is one in origin, and therefore one in destiny. Mankind have one source, God or infinite goodness. Hence a *perfect* fellowship or equality among them is a prime law of their constitution. It is an actual necessity of their development. No man can be truly himself so long as any inequality exists between him and his fellow. If therefore society, as now organized, as determined by its existing institutions, decree the inequality of man with man, it of course confesses itself imperfect, or hostile to the divine unity, and pleads therefore, in an irresistible manner, with all the rational and humane potencies of the universe, to come and modify it. For man having an essential equality, an equality in God, which means of course an equality (I do not say an identity) of spiritual endowment, of genius, of active force, his very divinity forbids him resting content with unequal social relations. He will incessantly agitate society, incessantly urge it onward, until at length it realizes its own ideal by the legislative

destruction of all privilege, or by the extension of an equal subsistence and an equal education to all its offspring.

Thus, society having had from the beginning one sole end, which is the organization of human fellowship or equality—the equality which man has in God or his creative source,—its practical attitude or operation could not have been hostile towards either moral pole of humanity, towards either charity or self-love, but must have incessantly tended on the contrary to their effectual reconciliation. Accordingly if we look at the course of history, we find the progress of human life generating an incessant equilibrium of these moral elements. While the distinction of the two elements continues unabated, we nevertheless find human life assuming a shape which is properly neither good nor evil, but rather their equilibrium or indifference. While we find both the saint and the sinner still extant and emphatic in their several ways, we yet find the great mass of men very little occupied with moral action, strictly considered. We find comparatively few men concerned in devising good to others at their own expense, or in devising good to themselves at the expense of others. We find the bulk of mankind occupied simply in devising how to put bread into their own mouths and those of their offspring, consistently with their social obligations. The mass of

mankind, that portion of the race which has constituted its real glory and vigor, has never devoted itself to the direct cultivation of the affections whether of self-love or benevolence, but purely to the prosecution of the arts of life, those arts or methods which enable man to subdue nature to himself and live in amity with all other men.

Thus the past operation of society has served to stimulate Art, or a mode of industry distinctively human. I call Art a distinctively human development, because it fully recognizes both elements of human nature, the good and the evil, the higher and lower one, or brotherly love and self-love. Art denies neither love, but accepts both and gratifies both, for every work of Art promotes both the advantage of the community and the honor or emolument of the Artist. Hence Art may be styled man's characteristic activity, as expressing the whole of his nature, or inviting the freest play of both its moral elements. It excludes from its field neither the saint nor the sinner, neither serpent nor dove, but perfectly authenticates the aspiration of both. In his private relations a man may obey either moral pole: he may be a man of acute or deficient sympathies with his kind: he may habitually consult his neighbor first and himself last, or conversely. But so far as he prosecutes any distinctively human function, in so far as he pursues any of the recognized arts of life, his atti-

tude is neither good nor evil, neither animated by self-love purely nor purely by charity, but is rather the equilibrium or indifference of the two. The three learned professions fall under this rule; all the functions of civil and political administration, all the trades, all the pursuits of science and mechanical invention, all mimetic and histrionic achievements, all games and sportive enterprises of every kind, are only so many colanders or sieves for the distillation of this true human essence. The clergyman, the lawyer or the physician may be very clever, very devoted, and very successful in his profession, while as to the bent of his private affections he may be a good or bad man indifferently. The statesman may excel in judgment and zeal for his country's service: the tradesman, the *savant*, the mechanic, the poet, painter, actor, may exhibit an extreme brilliancy of achievement in their several spheres: and yet no one upon that evidence shall be able to give the private attitude of any of these men towards the ten commandments. Thus of all the chief names in civil and political history, in the history of the church, in the history of science and the arts, some have been saints and some sinners; some have habitually obeyed the inspirations of moral good, some have habitually neglected them. In their public aspect, that aspect in which their names and memories have become the property of humanity, they

satisfied both these elements. That is to say, by the work they accomplished they both promoted the public good and advanced their own interests. Their merely personal or private qualities accordingly are forgotten, or remembered only by industrious literary gossips.

Thus the aim of society from the beginning has been practically to shed both saint and sinner, practically to ignore the mere finite and differential man, and so prepare the way for that infinite and unitary man to whom the lordship of the earth is divinely due. Its incessant practical operation has been to disuse the man whose affections are at all disproportionate either by excess or defect to his active fellowship with others, to his cordial social activity, and so prepare the way for the perfect man, the man who shall have no affection unauthenticated by the demands of his immediate life, or all whose capital shall be invested in enterprises of present profit. In strict subserviency to this end it has opened up within the bounds of the moral universe the temple of Art, that great theatre of human industry which invites all aspirants indifferently, without respect to creed or complexion, and in which the good and evil man having severally laid aside their private badges at the entrance, meet on equal terms to prosecute a common destiny by common methods. It is to this sphere accordingly, the sphere of Art, that we are

authorized to look for the truest emblems of the consummate man, for the clearest revelation and foretaste of that positive manhood which shall one day lift us above nature, and give us the plenary fellowship of God.

Let us embalm the Artist therefore in our regard for his prophetic worth. Let us freely honor the poet, painter, clergyman, ruler, lawyer, mechanist, for his humanitary worth, in that his labors have given our earthly life a positive aspect, or changed it from the condition of a mere port of entry to heaven and hell, into an independent kingdom making heaven and hell jointly tributary to itself. But let us honor none of these men for his own sake. None of them is perfect *in se.* None of them exhibits the image of Deity. None of them presents that perfect union of the opposing elements of human nature which constitutes sovereign manhood, and which shall therefore characterize the man of the future. They all exhibit, as I have said, the equilibrium or indifference of these elements, rather than their active union; exhibit in fact a compromise of them, rather than their full and cordial concurrence. They all more or less limit the good element by the evil one, or measure their devotion to the public weal by their own private advantage. No clergyman in the land obeys the pure inspirations of God as manifested in his own soul, but only as sanctioned by certain

traditional formulas approved by his sect. No lawyer enforces the principles of absolute justice, but only so far as embodied in certain existing standards. No poet declares the whole truth that trembles upon his soul, nor any painter the ineffable beauty that dazzles his inner vision. For poet and painter, lawyer and priest, are obliged before all things to secure a living upon the earth, and yield to their inspirations only so far therefore as consists with that prime necessity.

These men consequently do not fulfil our human aspiration. They have indeed carried the world onward: to them human history has been indebted for all its vivacity and sweetness: they have preserved our life from indolence, stagnation, and putridity: they may therefore be called truly Providential men, men to whom the Lord has accommodated His stature in the past. They are not the Lord, or the complete divine man, but accommodations of him adapted to the conditions of our ignorance, or to the imperfect evolution of human destiny. They are harbingers of the perfect man, the nearest approximation permitted by our infirm science, but they are by no means his veritable self. They bear indeed precisely the same relation to him that the present path of the ecliptic does to the equator, which is a relation of decided obliquity. Philosophers tell us that when the earth shall have attained her true poise upon her

axis, the path of the ecliptic will be coincident with the equator, and the rigors of winter and the fervors of summer consequently will alike give place to a new and perpetual spring, which shall bathe the whole earth in gladness. So when humanity shall have attained true moral poise, these men who have hitherto been her ecliptic, who have marked the place of the divine footsteps, who have belted the earth with a Providential lustre, will give place to the equatorial or perfect man, who shall completely reconcile the still disunited elements of good and evil in a new individuality, which shall carry the dew and fragrance of God into every commonest nook of our daily life, and absorb alike the parched aridity of the saint and the rank fecundity of the sinner in the unity of integral man.

LECTURE IV.

THE OLD AND NEW THEOLOGY.

THE OLD AND NEW THEOLOGY.

THE summary form which the gospel took at the hands of Jesus and his apostles, was that he the crucified and risen man was the true Christ of God: and all they who believed this gospel were declared his people.

The old controversy is now past. No one any longer pretends to deny that Jesus was the Christ. We all believe it traditionally. So true is this, that the original formula has lost all meaning for us. We never think why Jesus should be the Christ, nor dream of finding the gospel in that fact. But there it lies, and there only. The truth that Jesus was the Christ, when all the facts of his life are viewed in their bearing upon Jew and Gentile, really represents to my understanding an infinite goodness and wisdom. It involves no mystery. Spiritually viewed, it is indeed the complete antidote to darkness on the whole field of

human destiny, or of man's relations to God. For it spiritually imports that the divine power and glory shall be manifested in man, only when man shall have become emancipated from his natural and social thraldom, and made obedient exclusively to his inspirations.

Just in proportion then to one's joy in this universal truth, in this veritable gospel, is his disgust at those shabby little queries which the various sects propose to him instead, namely, whether he believes in infant or adult baptism, or both: whether he believes in the regenerating efficacy of the rite upon children when administered by an authentic priesthood: whether he believes in a partial or universal salvation of man: whether he believes in short in the gospel of Papacy, Episcopacy, or Presbytery. One's attitude on any or all of these points may be a sufficient evidence to another of his general intelligence or stupidity, but clearly it has no bearing upon the revelation of the divine name in the suffering and glorified outcast of Nazareth. In fact all the sects set their candidates upon an inquisition into his own orthodoxy, rather than into the truth of the gospel. Hence a thousand falsities get lodged in the memory which would never have obtained access there, had the mind been originally directed to inquire into their truth simply without regard to their orthodoxy.

What then, because the sects are not respected, shall the truth suffer loss? By no means. The feeling is universal among those who repugn sectarian peculiarities, that they are not therefore less, but the more related to the living church. It is always and simply ludicrous to hear persons of this class charged with infidelity by the sects. I am sure that no one making the charge would easily do so, if he could anticipate the half-compassionate, half-mirthful feeling it excites in those exposed to it. An esteemed clerical friend recently said to me, in speaking of some reformers whose zeal in his opinion exceeded their wisdom, "these reformers must first of all come into the church, and then we will take care that all the reforms they ask for take place." I inquired of him which church he meant, the Romish or Episcopal, the Presbyterian or Baptist? "I mean none of these," he replied with what appeared to me an embarrassed air, "I mean the universal or invisible church." Ah, said I, the reformer will probably tell you that he is already in full communion of that church, and that it is precisely on that account that he disclaims every impertinent shibboleth alike of Rome, Canterbury, or Geneva.

It is even so. Never was there a time when the immense reality symbolized by the church found so spontaneous a homage from cultivated intellect as at present. The possibility, and not that alone,

but the rapidly approaching advent, of a divine life for man, is avouched by thousands of guileless Simeons cheerfully singing their *Nunc Dimittis.* The temper of these persons, too, such as I have known them, towards the ritual church is destitute of acrimony. They originate no *propaganda* apart from the progress of science: they seek to turn no one away from the rites which custom has sanctified to his memory: they study, many of them, the beautiful humanitary or universal meaning enclosed in these rites and ceremonies, thus bringing forth in an instructive manner things which at the same time are both new and old: and they exhibit a serenity under misconstruction and reproach which claims the homage of a cordial respect.

In fact the idea of the church is experiencing a larger evolution. A growing conviction besets men that the ritual church is not a finality, but a means to an end, and that this end is a truly divine or perfect life for man on the earth. It is well that the literal church should have got established; it is very well also that it should have claimed and been allowed priority of the State, because the life which it symbolizes is superior to that symbolized by the State. But having got thus established, it was bound to cease thinking of itself, and to begin the inauguration of that perfect life for whose interests alone it existed. Failing to fulfil this obligation, it fell into intestine division and anarchy,

and is now no longer a ruling element in Christendom, but a sect among the sects zealously contending for the public favor.

Thus the history of the old ecclesiasticism begets itself a new and more spiritual conception of the church. For the inevitable concession which it makes, and its daughters make, to the democratic sentiment everywhere, the pretension they all make to regard the condition of the poor and to modify oppressive legislation in that behalf, only prove that the vital idea of the church is a humanitary one, and that its true end accordingly is not its own aggrandizement, but the elevation of universal man. Thus while the world is losing all regard for mere ecclesiastical interests, and zeal in this direction is confined to official persons and their followers within the church, the great mass of the titular church, especially the Protestant half, is actively intent upon the varied reforms of the day, and seeks in the rich humanitary promise of the future, the fulfilment of the church's mission.

It is impossible that they whose eyes have once been opened to discern the true powers of the world to come, to discern the profoundly *humane* substance which underlies and vitalizes all the shadows of Church and State, should ever prove forgetful of the lesson, and go back again to the worship of symbols. At all events it is impossible that the sectarian notion of the church should ever

gain the empire of the human mind. This notion is always and purely selfish. The mark of a sect, and you see it in all from the Romish down to the Mormon one, is its disposition to separate itself from the ordinary lot of humanity, to esteem itself obedient to the divine will, and all dissidents from itself contrary to that will. Accordingly the obvious criticism which sectarianism invites the world over, is that it presumes a contrariety between God and man which is not merely disclaimed by every advance of science, but which is directly oppugnant to the mission of Jesus.

The sectarian conception of the relation between God and man is notoriously disclaimed by science, or the organized observation of nature and society, because every advance of science demonstrates the perfect unity of God and man, *by showing the whole realm of nature divinely accommodated to the development of man's power, and to the aggrandizement of his passional and intellectual existence.* Our ecclesiastical dogmas teach the opposite of this. They place God in the attitude of exacting something from his own dependent creature, and they place the creature consequently in a *meritorious* attitude towards Him, in the attitude of serving Him for a reward. Science demonstrates that the only becoming temper of mind on our part towards the Divine, is that of boundless exultation in the riches of His beneficence, and of determined acti-

vity towards the fullest possible realization of it. Sectarianism, on the other hand, declares that God looks upon us with aversion, save as we are connected with itself; being stayed in His purpose of summary destruction only by the intervention of a third party: and that our proper position towards Him therefore is one of trembling and abject supplication. Every day of the week the sun comes forth to illustrate the benignity of the Universal Father, and the waving of leaves, and the murmur of brooks, and the laughter of corn on the hillsides, and the ringing melody that ascends from the whole physical creation, and the myriad-fold success of human enterprise in the realms of traffic and art, all attest and confirm the illustration. Much more eloquently even does the grander temple of the human heart proclaim the same benignity. For we find all of its various affections when left to their unperverted flow, bringing forth fruits of invariable joy and peace. But on Sunday, sectarianism diligently denies all that the busy week and a peaceful heart have taught us. For instead of confirming their tidings of the life which comes everywhere unbought and even unsought, of the glory that is on every creature both great and small which the divine hand has fashioned, it reports a life universally forfeited and never to be regained save in a limited measure, and through the purchase of inconceivable suffering.

But the sectarian conception of the relation between man and God not only falsifies the teachings of science, it falsifies also the mission of Jesus. Doubtless the sectarian is unaware of such an effect, because his idea of the Christ is modified by the exigencies of his own ecclesiastical polity, and does not reflect therefore the exact truth of history. But clearly no unbiassed reader of the gospels will demur when I say, that the Christ denied any contrarious relation between God and man. He indeed affirmed such a relation between God and the sectarian man, or the man who like the Pharisee separated himself from the ordinary lot of humanity, and claimed if not a monopoly, at least a priority in the divine favor. But the affirmation of contrariety in *this* direction, is an emphatic denial of it in every other, and is tantamount in fact to the declaration of a perfect unity between man *as man* and God. For if to separate oneself from one's kind virtually be to separate oneself from God, so conversely to be at one with one's kind, must imply the being at one with God.

But let us take a closer view of the fundamental discrepancy between the Old and New Theology. By the Old theology let me premise that I mean that which under every form of superficial difference remains substantially the same in all the sects, from the old Romish down to the modern Swedenborgian. I say that the theology of all these sects

is substantially the same under whatever varieties of doctrinal drapery, because in all alike it begets the conception of God as a person finited from man by space and time, and consequently makes ritual or dramatic religion permanent, makes it indeed the only possible religion.

The New theology, on the other hand, is not so easy to define, because it appeals exclusively to the rational understanding instead of the memory. It is not a new *credo* or formulary, but rather the spirit of all creeds and the substance of all formulas. It disavows every sect, because it authenticates all mankind in avouching God to be the inmost and inseparable life of every man great or small, wise or stupid, good or evil. This theology claims to be the spiritual or impersonal meaning of all the literal or personal facts of the four gospels: claims to shew how the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, symbolized that complete lordship of nature which universal man shall ere long achieve, by virtue of his essential or indwelling divine force. Doubtless this theology being spiritual constitutes its own evidence, and can neither be much advanced nor much retarded by ratiocination. By its very terms it excludes all outward or miraculous attestation, appealing only to the scientific intellect or the intellect devoid of prejudice. Not only its existence but the grounds of that existence in the nature

of God and man, have long been set forth even to tedium in the humane and philosophic page of Swedenborg. But it derives no lustre even from his shining endowments.*

Having thus posited our combatants, let us next ascertain what is the precise bone of contention between them. This decidedly is no other than the religious problem itself. What the Old and New theology differ about is *the true significance of the religious instinct* in man. When we survey the history of the race, we find that the church has always claimed a *supernatural* basis, or shed contempt upon the merely natural life of man. Wherever ritual religion, or the sensuous worship of God, has existed most purely, that is to say least modified by social refinement, it has alleged a profound disjunction between God and the merely natural or carnal man. And the bearing of this

* It is by the way much to be regretted that an ecclesiastical sect should have seen fit to nucleate itself upon this long-suffering old philosopher; because from the nature of the case a sect has necessities which no writings are adequate to meet save in so far as they are destitute of humanitary interest, or confess themselves unworthy of general attention. But Swedenborg's writings palpably exclude all sectarian ambitions, affording matter only of universal or scientific interest. Hence the sectarian attitude of his *soi-disant* disciple should no more be allowed to prejudice him in public regard, by suggesting a low estimate of his scientific value, than the climbing parasite is allowed to prejudice the hearty and unconscious oak, whose robust age shall live down a thousand of its deciduous generations.

fact upon human destiny accordingly, or in other words, the philosophic import of the religious instinct, has always aroused the liveliest activity of the human intellect.

Now, to make a long story short, the more you fix your attention upon this fact, the more inevitable one or other of the following conclusions will appear to you, namely: 1. That creation is a failure and the destiny of the creature consequently extremely dubious, if not decidedly wretched: or 2. That the natural life is not our essential life, but rather the form or mould by means of which that life becomes pronounced or defined.

The Old theology affirms the former of these conclusions. It declares that creation failed at its very inception, and that the destiny of the creature consequently is not normal, but medicated or remedial. Thus it abandons the field of nature utterly, and removes man's destiny to another world, where it exhibits him subject either to the hospitalities of heaven or the inclemencies of hell. He never regains his normal *status* in either of these conditions. Heaven is at the best always a hospital to him. Hell at the best is always a prison to him. In either state alike he bears the scars of his original fall, and drags the chain of an eternal servitude or dependence.

The New theology on the other hand, which also calls itself Christian, though in an exquisitely

thorough and internal sense, affirms the latter of these conclusions. It denies that creation ever was or ever can be a failure, but declares that the natural life of man is intrinsically subordinate to his true or divine life, and that the office of religion hitherto in depressing the former, has been necessary simply as a means of introducing him to an acquaintance with the latter. The true life of man, which comes from God, which is God in him, and which is therefore an infinite life welling up from the fountains of his inmost spirit, cannot of course become manifested to man's consciousness so long as the outward or bodily life governs his activity. While the natural life controls his spirit, or governs his action, man cannot realize the life he has in God. He may believe in it as a tradition: he may believe that God originally created the fathers of his race: he may believe in God moreover as an outward and finite person living clear away in some celestial *limbo*, and that he shall receive at His hands after death the life promised to obedience, just as he might receive any other sensible gift. But he has no belief in God as a present life, because appearances do not warrant it. For the quality of our present life is undivine, is such as to make the divine benignity appear partial, which of course destroys its divinity. Infidelity is thus almost the best tribute which the superficial or uncultivated mind can now render to the

divine perfection, because the marvels of its power still lie so far beneath the surface of things, and yield themselves up only to reflection. Go speak to your footman or the cook in your kitchen, both of whom are mastered by their mere bodily necessities, both of whom toil year in and year out all their days, for no other end than to keep the base breath of nature in their bodies: go ask these persons whether God is a very present life to them? Will not their instinctive loyalty to God or the perfect life, make them laugh in your face, or else put on that expression of stupid and idiotic assent, which has become almost the sole expression of the human countenance, when divine things are mentioned? There can be no doubt on this point, as every one's experience bears me witness. So long as the natural life controls man's spirit, he cannot realize the life he has in God. Religion consequently has always borne a protest against this life being considered our true life. It has always appealed to the instincts of infinitude within us, to depress or dishonor the natural life, in hope of one day achieving another which shall befit our illimitable aspirations.

Thus the New theology differs from the Old. While the latter makes self-denial an end, the former makes it a means to an end. While the one declares the natural life to be absolutely evil, and therefore to be cast out, the other declares it

to be simply servile or ministerial, and therefore to be reduced to order or subjection. In short, the Old theology views the religious problem as significant of despair for man; the New as significant of hope and consolation. It is true that the old theology in words allows its disciples a hope of the divine clemency, provided they exhibit a certain differential attitude from other men towards a certain scheme of recovery provided by God: but the difference in question is so faintly shaded, and liable besides to so many intrinsic attenuations, as to afford no practical comfort to the modest and sober-minded, while it frequently heightens a previous self-conceit into fanaticism.

The different bearing of the two theologies upon the divine character, is especially deserving of note. The Old theology makes creation a *voluntary* procedure on God's part, or a distinct exhibition of *will*, and hence makes God imperfect or finite. For will has no other fountain than want, and to feel a want in any respect is to feel so far forth insufficient to oneself, and to be insufficient to oneself is the very citadel and armory of imperfection. The New theology, on the other hand, makes creation a purely *spontaneous* procedure on the part of God. That is to say, it declares God creative, not through any effort of will, but in Himself, thus without effort. God is *essentially* active, active *in se*, or in His very self, and not as

we are through our natural passions or wants. And to be active in oneself, and not by pressure of one's nature, is obviously to be creative. Hence the New theology declares that God creates or gives being to the universe, not by his will, but by Himself. He alone it is, and not His will, as discriminated by the Old theology from Himself, which creates or gives being to things.

It is precisely here that the immense scientific advantage of the New theology appears, for in making God creative *in se*, or by dint of His essential perfection, *it necessarily makes the creature His image, and so binds science to the celebration of the divine infinitude.* The harmonies of creation are the theme of science, and if these harmonies, according to the New theology, only reflect those which are uncreated or absolute, it follows of course that science has at bottom no other task than the illustration of Deity. Thus the New theology links science to the altar of God, and endows her radiant priesthood with sole and plenary power to intercept cursing and bring down blessing from on high. The Old theology, with a fine instinct, subjects its priesthood to a perpetual baptism or purification, because it is merely a symbolic priesthood, ministering a *quasi* divine benediction to a *quasi* divine people. The New theology disallows every baptism, or denies the relevancy of purification, because her priesthood being ex-

clusively a scientific one is final, ministering a true divine benediction to a truly divine people, that is to universal humanity, without respect to creed or complexion.

The Old theology moreover in affirming creation to be strictly voluntary on the part of God, leaves the creature in very insecure relation to Him. For it is notoriously the attribute of will to be fickle or inconstant. A fixed will, a will pertinaciously anchored upon any thing or event, to the intolerance of any other thing or event, is the definition of insanity. Surely then, unless our continuance be grounded in something else than the divine will, unless it be grounded in the essential and immutable perfection of God, we have a wretchedly insecure hold upon existence. The immaculate sanity of that will stamps our existence ephemeral. In fact, the old theology in denying any rational *principle* to creation, denies it also any rational prognostic. In excluding an exact *diagnosis* from its field of vision, it of course excludes an exact *prognosis*, and consequently confutes its own pretension as a true *rationale* of creation. For an event contingent upon pure will confesses itself irrational, or immethodical, and consequently permits no account of itself. And this is virtually the aspect of creation as represented by the old theology. It affirms substantially though not in words, that God created us in sport, or merely for

the display of His arbitrary will, a will irresponsible even to His own essential perfection: that having given us faculties of the most admirable temper, and an apprehension of perfection so vivacious and profound as to beget the most burning aspirations towards it, He has after all left these aspirations unbacked by any proportionate power, and so made both the mode and the duration of our existence simply lawless, or what is the same thing dependent upon His own will.

The New theology, on the other hand, asserts a very secure relation between creator and creature. It denies that creation is an exhibition of the divine will, strictly so called, and affirms it to be an operation rather of the essential perfection of God, an outgrowth of His very selfhood, so to speak, in which case of course it is the very image of reason, the very model of order. It claims that the whole being of God, not His power merely but His love and wisdom, in short His total selfhood, is implicated in creation, and consequently that the creature's welfare is as assured as God's own perfection.

Now both these theologies, that which is rapidly setting and that which is as rapidly rising, claim the name of Christian, though the latter in a much more eminent sense than the other. In order therefore to compass an intelligent judgment of

their quarrel, let us ascertain the precise point of view in which they severally regard the Christ.

Every person knows that it is possible to contemplate Jesus in two aspects, either a literal or fixed one, which was that cherished by his immediate disciples up to the period of his death, because it related him to their sensuous and superstitious conceptions of Deity: or a spiritual and expansive one, capable of growing with the growth of the human mind, and relating him therefore to the most advanced and scientific conceptions of Deity. This latter aspect was apparently the more congenial one to his own spirit, and was plainly provided for by the entire tenor of his parabolic or mystical instruction. Thus with the early disciple we may still regard the Christ after the flesh or carnally, and look upon his word as purely literal, as having an import only to the ear. Or we may with Paul cease to know him after the flesh, viewing his words only as spirit and life, or as addressing the spiritual understanding of the hearer instead of his omnivorous memory. In short we may view him simply on his finite personal side, or as to all those limitations which made him a Jew, and brought him into collision with that desperate people: or we may view him on his infinite and spiritual side, that is as to that temper of mind which lifted him out of all private or partial affinities, and gave him unity with universal man. In

the former case we leave him a mere finite person, although greater in degree than other persons. In the latter case we exalt his finite personality into a type of universal truth.

Now the Old theology contemplates the Christ exclusively in the former or limitary aspect. It makes his worth to us a purely outside and arbitrary thing, attributing to him the power of literally influencing the divine will, and so preventing any person that pleases him suffering an otherwise inevitable damnation. It takes every fact of his life and death at its *prima facie* or obvious value, and affirms in the roundest of terms that unless we yield him a certain voluntary submission, unless we make a certain personal surrender of ourselves to him, we shall suffer inconceivable sorrows. Thus it makes the noble battle which Jesus fought with the ignorance and superstition of his people, a battle in behalf of his own personal glory, not in behalf of universal man. He seemed a man of the purest benevolence, and cherished sympathies so universal as to provoke the keenest disgust from his bigotted kindred. But all this was subordinate to an ulterior selfish aim. He indulged these sympathies not for their own sake simply, or as a finality, but as a means to an end, or by way of winning a title to universal dominion. Hence consistently the old theology forever crowds us Gentiles, us Christians, back to that narrow Judean

platform, and makes us simulate first every tedious feature of the Jewish or personal opposition to Jesus, and then every tedious feature of Jewish or personal submission to him, before it allows us any hope of his favor. For once in the history of humanity, for once in all time and space, it allows the Deity to break the sullen monotony of His displeasure, and take delight in a man. But once only. The snow-flake upon the river which is a moment white, then gone forever, is a miracle of perpetuity compared with the transitory clemency it ascribes to Deity. It denies that Jesus came merely to reveal a grandeur of perfection in Deity to which mankind were strangers by ignorance and unbelief, a perfection which is never more and never less whether men believe it or not. No, his gospel is not a revelation of the uncreated and unchangeable divine perfection; it is rather the affirmation of a certain change induced upon the divine mind by Jesus; the product of a certain softening operation which he effected upon the hitherto unmalleable properties of Deity. He came not to show God magnanimous, but to make him so. He enabled God to be merciful and just. He actually empowered God to be Godlike. Consequently it is only in so far as he is concerned that God is great and generous. It is only as shut up to his *physique* that the universal Father appears arrayed in any human or attractive qualities. Hence whoso

does not catch the divine favor as let down through the chink of his personality—a personality whose historic reality moreover is necessarily unknown to the vast bulk of the race—must need pocket the loss eternally.

It is easy enough to see that this old theology so affronts the common sense of men, so outrages our conceptions of the divine perfection, that it necessitates its own decease.* It discharges Deity of every amiable and dignified attribute, and therein discharges man of all homage towards Him save that of abject fear. It represents Him as forever gloomily devising vengeance towards men for an infirmity induced upon them by the very nature which He himself gives them, and then as stayed in His sanguinary purposes not by any merciful relentings, not by any touch of sweet human pity, but only by the superior allurements of another victim, whose superhuman nature enables him to assuage a superhuman thirst of blood. I am perfectly familiar with the special pleading by which the apologists of the old theology seek to palliate

* I am aware that a certain diligent transmutation of orthodoxy is going on in New England, by which it is eviscerated of its immemorial contents, and yet avouched to be the same gospel. But somehow, in spite of the extreme zeal and good faith embarked in this enterprise, no dispassionate observer of the process can help feeling that the solid nutmeg aroma of the old orthodoxy is rapidly dissipating into a thin flavor of basswood.

the naked deformity of its dogmas in this direction. One indeed gladly acquits them of a personal complicity with dogmas of which they are ashamed: but they cannot alter the logical import of the dogmas themselves. On the showing of the Old theology it is undeniable, that the sufferings of man for an offence involved in his very nature, and therefore inevitable to him, are actually *bought off* from the framer of that nature by the sufferings of a being above man. Accordingly the relation between God and man induced by this transaction is not one jot more genial and human than it was before. It is simply the relation of indifference which the vulture is under to the dove, which the tiger is under to the lamb, when once its hunger has been effectually appeased.

Of course in taking this view of Christianity the Old theology does but carry out its fundamental view of creation. It holds creation itself to be a product of will exclusively, or to have originally proceeded from the mere arbitrary *fiat* of Deity, and consequently absolves its subsequent history from all responsibility to the laws of order or reason. For if you concede an irrational beginning to a phenomenon—a beginning that is which bears no *ratio* to the human understanding—you may postulate any disorderly development or termination for it you please. Your premises exempt you from accountability.

The New theology in taking a profounder view of creation, takes also a less superficial view of Christianity. For in making creation to start from the essential perfection of God, or His most intimate selfhood, it of course makes the whole tenor of its developments strictly orderly, or consonant with the highest reason. Thus in affirming God himself as the sole source of life to the universe, it denies any absolute superiority among His creatures, denies that any one person possesses any *absolute* claim to the supremacy of other persons. For from the fact of the precisely equal creatureship of all, whatever superiority one may exhibit to another must attach not to himself but to the Creator, must be not a passive but an active superiority, the superiority of genius, of power, of function. Hence the New theology pronounces the current literal view of Christianity absurd and superstitious, save as the basis or continent of a spiritual view. It regards the Christ not from person, which is to finite him, but from spirit, which is to give him infinitude. It views the recorded incidents of his life, death and resurrection, not as possessing a merely historic and superficial value, but much more a philosophic value as symbols or exponents of universal truth. The person of Christ it says belonged of course only to the Jews. His spirit belongs in a most eminent manner to entire humanity. The Gentiles had no

personal relations to him, nor any personal knowledge of him. He was dead and buried before they had heard the authentic mention of his name. He was heralded to them only as a spiritual redeemer. The quarrel which the Jews had with him as the desecrator of their law, as the blasphemer of their national God, as the contemner of their most honored priests and rulers, was all unknown to the Gentiles; or if known could not be appreciated by them, because they knew nothing of the fanatical sanctity the Jew arrogated to himself. It was therefore only by his humanitary doctrines and deeds, only as the vindicator of universal man from spiritual tyranny and oppression, that the Christ could have appealed to Gentile sympathy. They cherished his memory, not because they supposed him to entertain any personal regard for them over his own brethren, but simply because he avouched a Deity higher than their thought had yet conceived, a Deity great enough to bless all his children alike, and extremely prone therefore to despise every laborious claim to distinction which the technical saint preferred to the technical sinner.

Thus while the New theology concedes the unprecedented personal virtue of the Christ, and his legitimate historic influence, it at the same time interdicts him any *personal* claim upon our *spiritual* allegiance. Without going into the philosophic

ground of this interdict, which imports *that the spiritual idea of man is without the idea of person*, let it suffice to say here that the New theology in making it is exactly consistent with its own fundamental axiom, which is that God gives being to the universe by Himself alone, and hence that every man is what he is solely by the indwelling of God, or to the exclusion of all desert in himself. Accordingly whatsoever grandeur of endowment may have hitherto befallen any person, the lesson conveyed by it accrues to the benefit of universal man, and not to that of the person himself. For inasmuch as God is one and his creature one, no person is great on his own independent account, but only by virtue of his identification with the most enlarged humanity, only in so far as he represents universal man. Hence the great Providential men who have diversified the page of history and turned its level march into a glittering pageantry, claim no passive or personal but only a functional superiority to other men, a superiority which grows out of their humanitary obedience, which is imposed upon them in fact by the necessities of human destiny, and thus subjects them equally with all other persons to the issues of that destiny. The sacredness of Deity does not—except to the sensuous or brute understanding, still dominated by the mere shows of time and space—arise from any antagonism he presents to us, because

where as in this case one party is all, and the other nothing, antagonism is simply impossible: but only from His boundless furtherance and beneficence towards us. He is great and adorable not by His invincible distance from us, but by His intimate nearness, by stooping as it were to our native littleness and lifting us to the dimensions of His majesty. Did He measure His strength by our weakness—did He aggrandize Himself by our dimunition—He would be detestable, not adorable. Rather it is impossible to say what emotion he would excite, because the creature of such a power being of course proportionate to its creator, could have no sentiment in common with God's creature.

Hence the prime ministers of Deity, they who speak the most directly from His inspiration, commend themselves to our recognition chiefly by a humanitary temper. The sole personal distinction they claim over others is that of a spotless humility. The measure of their veracity as stewards of divine mysteries, is the sense they entertain of their personal insignificance, of their precise personal equality with other men. Thus the New theology estimates heroic or exceptional men not at their obvious and finite value, but at their humanitary, prophetic, and infinite worth. It glorifies them by resolving whatsoever is personal and superficial about them, into what is universal and

substantial. Preeminently therefore is it bound to observe this method with Jesus, for every incident of his life owns such an inseparable humanitary flavor, all his words and deeds—when viewed according to the spirit which animated them—are so grandly human and impersonal, as to force upon us the conception of their typicality, and make a literal interpretation in fact derogatory.*

In thus discriminating between the Old and New theology, I beg that you will acquit me of any intention to reflect upon the persons of those who make up the existing sectarianism. Surely no suspicion of the kind should attach to me, while I expressly disclaim all personal aims or interests for the New theology. This theology so far as I apprehend its meaning, knows no persons, confers no personal consequence, receives honor from no man. Having a purely scientific basis, setting forth only what is eternally and infinitely good and true, it of course drops from view what-

* Probably the highest tribute ever paid to the personality of Jesus, was that recently enacted by a distinguished German scholar, in attempting, very unsuccessfully however, to resolve the entire record of his personal history into a humanitary myth. This good man finds the evangelic facts so full of sheer *manliness*, so full of the widest human meaning and promise, that he resolves henceforth to deny them actuality, and regard them simply as a rhythmic dance of the human intellect celebrating the oncoming splendors of the race.

soever is peculiar to any *cultus* under the sun, whatsoever is merely finite and differential in every worship, and preserves that which is unitary and essential in all, namely, the spirit of the worshipper. It is a doctrine of universal man in relation with God, not of persons. It declares that no name known on earth is known in heaven, because as I have already said the spiritual idea of man is destitute of the idea of person. Person or name to the spiritual understanding means quality. Hence you perceive that the New theology is bound to shed every ritual, Pagan and Christian alike. It makes baptisms superstitious and sacraments profane, whenever either claims a literal sanctity. It anoints man, and consequently supersedes the priest.*

* I have indeed heard as I have intimated in a previous note, of attempts made both in England and this country to dramatize the new theology, and give it a decorous Sunday outfit and institution, as though it were only some new edition in larger type of the old ecclesiasticism. But these attempts are so incongruous with every rational perception of its drift, and they logically involve, whether they have actually begotten or not, so many and such tiresome controversies, as to whether for example the new ministry be an institution of trine or of simple dimension—whether the minister's tie to the flock be strictly conjugal or not—as to how the new ministry and the new ordinances become more efficacious than the old—and how far the spheres of new Jerusalem children may be prejudiced by those of the old Jerusalem—that the whole pretension tumbles off into mere ecclesiastical wantonness.

Denying then as I do thus clearly that the New theology has any sectarian schemes to promote: affirming for it as I do so divine—so humane—a temper, as to put a brand of perfect infamy upon every person, however conventionally sacred, who should accept *compulsory* homage, or attempt to exalt himself by the subjection of others: you will not suppose me capable of any hostility to the *persons*, whether lay or clerical of the old ecclesiasticism. Its standards do indeed defame the humane perfection of God. And it therefore necessarily places the worshipper, in so far as it is operative, in a sinister and servile attitude towards Him. But I should abhor to believe that it is thus operative upon a large number of those who are nominally incorporated with it. I greatly prefer to agree with the candid old Swedenborg, than whom no one has done ampler critical justice to the existing sectarianism, and who yet remarks in his *Apocalypse Explained* §233, that the greater part of the Christian church is wholly unaffected by its prevalent errors, there being very few of its members who cherish the spirit of its doctrine. Yet no unprejudiced person will deny that the tendency of sectarianism, where it exists unchecked, is to beget and inflame hostile relations between man and God. It plants itself upon the stupid and fallacious testimony of the natural conscience

concerning the relations of man to God, and by reaffirming that testimony, perpetuates the most grovelling superstitions of the human mind. Let me make my meaning perfectly clear.

Conscience, or the knowledge of good and evil, is a phenomenon which marks the infancy of human culture. It has its origin in the limitation which the senses impose upon the infantile consciousness of man. For the very activity of the senses being contingent upon the principle of contrast or bipolarity in nature, as for example the contrast of light and darkness, pleasure and pain, motion and rest, growth and decay, life and death, in short good and evil: so they impose upon man a limitary consciousness, the consciousness of a selfhood limited by his own body and by his fellow-man.*

But a profound instinct of the soul wages eternal war with this finite consciousness. The soul of man incessantly affirms a positive good, or a good unlimited by any evil; affirms a positive light, or a light without any oppugnancy of dark-

* Those who are curious in the symbolism of the sacred writings, may like to know that this finite or natural selfhood of man is what is represented, according to Swedenborg, by the Eve of the garden of Eden. The sensual principle and its necessary power in the infantile development of man, is what is symbolized by the Serpent, and his influence with Eve.

ness; affirms a positive life, or a life which is without any contrast or antagonism of death.*

But of course so long as man's senses dominate him, and he regards himself accordingly as identified with his natural and moral conditions, he can only refer this perfect good, this positive life, away from himself, away from humanity, to some far distant and different being. And inasmuch as he rightly regards his exclusion from this tree of life, or perfect good, to his natural selfhood dominated by the teaching of the senses, so consequently he heaps up reproach upon that selfhood, and subjects it to all manner of laborious discipline, in order to get deliverance from the doom of nature. Like Adam, who said, "the woman thou gavest me, *she* did give me of the tree," etc., so man lays all the blame of his conscious death upon his natural self, and by instituting a rigorous rule over all its issues, hopes at length to elicit from it some redeeming virtue.

Here precisely lies the fundamental error of man, in identifying himself with his natural conditions, and in seeking consequently to achieve perfection

* This instinct of the soul is symbolized by the tree of life, standing in the centre of the garden, of which alone man is destined to eat and live. This life will take place as soon as man shall acknowledge the divine *Humanity*, or what is the same thing, cease to conceive of God under sensible conditions, or conditions of time and space, that is, as an outward and finite person: which conception is the parent of all superstition.

by cultivating these. His perfection is already provided and secure in God, or essential man, and only waits his belief of the fact—only waits the cessation of his efforts to bring it out of his finite or natural conditions—to flow into his consciousness. To seek righteousness, to seek infinitude, by the diligent cultivation of his natural affections, by the rigid discharge of his social duties, was to seek it, as Christ taught, where it is not to be found, and to encounter despair and death instead. To identify himself with the law of nature or the law of society, and to expect life or peace in so doing, is to separate himself from God. The true secret of his happiness accordingly, and the sole condition of his righteousness, is at once to deny their supremacy, and fling back with utter scorn every opprobrium and menace they cast upon his deathless and immaculate soul. He is not required to ascend into heaven to bring life down to him, nor yet to descend into the earth to bring it up thence: he is required to do absolutely nothing, either difficult or easy, but simply to believe in God within him, ceaseless life of his life, inseparable soul of his soul.

This was the true purport of the gospel according to the Lord Jesus Christ, *the deliverance of man from the evil conscience imposed upon him by the tyranny of nature and society.* And the method of deliverance is as plainly indicated. It does not

consist in the subject's striving with new zeal and intensity to fulfil the letter of the law, for Jesus and his apostles shew that the law is spiritual, and disdains therefore any merely literal fulfilment. But it consists in the subject's utterly renouncing the letter as a source of righteousness or life, and despising alike its favor and its frown.

Sectarianism indeed admits all this in terms, but renders it practically nugatory, by immediately proceeding to erect the Christ himself into a deadlier lawgiver even than Moses. It admits very freely that any man who has broken the moral law, may find relief in Christ, not indeed from human vengeance, but at least from any *immortal* penalty assumed to be due to his offence. But then it proceeds not merely to impose in the name of Christ certain obligatory observances upon his followers throughout all time, but also to exact from them a habit of submission and deference to his presumed personal will, which is not only utterly repugnant to the character of the Christ and our common humanity, but actually saps the whole truth of his mediation, by exalting the whilom factor or agent into a principal, by converting the professed friend and benefactor into an inexorable tyrant.

You have been wont to smile at the old fable which represents an umpire swallowing the oyster for whose possession two parties are contending,

and then gravely handing over to each of the litigants a shell. But it is precisely this treacherous attitude which sectarianism ascribes to the Christ, under pretext of doing him special honor. For it represents the Christ as coming to mediate between God and man, and as forthwith incontinently absorbing all the grace of the one, and all the virtue of the other. This is an unheard of pretension, that a mediator to any dispute should himself become a third party, and be allowed to make the acceptance of his mediation obligatory on either side, by the threat of unspeakable sufferings to the disobedient.

The bare truth indeed of Christ's mediation, viewed as a literal fact, discharges the relation between man and God of all essential discrepancy. For of course no mediation is possible, where one of the parties is altogether right, and the other altogether wrong. Mediation in such a case would be a gross affront to the superior party. For a mediator is not of one side only. His function supposes a due proportion or equality between the principals. Some *misunderstanding* of their mutual relations exists on one side or the other, threatening to be permanent, when a mediator offers himself to remove it, by demonstrating their essential accord of interests. Accordingly had any essential contrariety existed between God and man, the mediatorial pretension of the Christ would have

been preposterous or misplaced. He might in that case have declared himself a partisan of either side, but the vital nature of their disagreement must have utterly precluded the function of mediation or reconciliation.

It was the peculiar infamy of the legal dispensation, according to Christ and his apostles, that it separated between man and God, giving the former whenever he sincerely attempted conformity to it, such a conscience of sin as violated the deepest instincts of his soul, and turned his filial desires into practical hate. And the Christ claimed it as his peculiar glory to break down and remove this legal separation of the parties, so restoring to the chief of sinners a conscience of perfect repose toward God. I do not read of his having any mission apart from this. I do not understand him as seeking any ulterior selfish end, in what he undertook to do. I see no trace whatever of any design to elevate himself above the level of our ordinary humanity by his enterprise of benevolence: and it is needless to say that if any such traces appeared, their obvious effect would be to depress him as far below that level, as he had aspired to rise above it. In short I find no quarrel whatever between him and man *as man.* The only quarrel he waged was that against the Scribe and Pharisee, against the privileged or sectarian man, the man who fattened upon the infamy of his

kind, and whose hope towards God was the measure of his fellow-man's despair.

Let me be perfectly understood. I say that the Christ maintained no quarrel with man *as man* at all, but only with the conventionally righteous man, the man whose goodness appeared only in contrast with his neighbor's evil. He never said a word in commendation of the current morality. He justified no saint or Pharisee, he condemned no sinner. On the contrary he invariably justified the sinner and condemned the Pharisee, declaring that the conventionally first among men should be last in God's kingdom, and the conventionally last first.

It was not the condemning power of the law which, to Christ's regard, separated man from God. It was its justifying power. Its condemning power went no further than to inhibit a finite righteousness, or a righteousness which stood only in the difference of one man to another. It did not exclude an infinite righteousness, or the righteousness which comes from God. On the contrary it shut the subject up to that. For God's righteousness being infinite, that is, dating from the inmost selfhood of the subject, the man of upright aims, the man who respected himself and could not therefore despise others, would covet no external distinction, would patiently allow any amount of literal or conven-

tional infirmity. His central repose would easily tolerate whatever superficial perturbation.

But the law considered as a *justifying* power was diabolic. It was the very citadel of hell. For he who was satisfied with its approbation, who asked nothing more of God than the righteousness it signalized, who aspired to the divine communion by the purely negative method of differencing himself from others, was at heart full of selfishness, full of malignity towards his fellows, and consequently in mortal antagonism with God. God is one, and his creature one. He therefore who should aspire to please God by distinguishing himself in any the most infinitesimal shape from another, affronts His fundamental perfection, sins against His holy spirit, excludes His most vital influence. Hence it was the legally condemned, not the legally justified person, the sinner not the saint, the harlot not the Pharisee, with whom the Christ found himself in most genial and friendly relation.

But how does sectarianism expedite this anti- or rather supra-legal mission of the Christ? By actually erecting him into a sturdier Moses than he whose function he came to displace, by actually turning his gospel into a subtler legality than that belched forth from Sinai, in short by actually converting the Christ himself from a friendly and efficient mediator into an eternal and remorseless barrier between God and man. For this is the

character which sectarianism undeniably assigns to Christ's mediation—*perpetuity*, so that the parties to it never come into direct friendly relation, but remain in themselves immitigable foes to the end of the chapter. What a preposterous conception of mediation in this! A mediation which is forever unaccomplished—which not only never restores the original *status quo*, the primal amicable relation of the parties, but actually exhausts that relation and necessitates one of incessant enmity instead, by making its own function eternal!

I beg my reader to give his earnest attention to this criticism, for it concerns the vital truth of Christianity. And in order that the truth may be more fully seen, let me dwell a moment longer on the point in question.

It will be conceded that the sectarian statement of Christian doctrine involves this fundamental principle, namely, that an essential hostility exists between man *as man* and God. Every sectarian creed assumes the fact as indisputable, that an intrinsic contrariety exists between the divine and human natures. And the Christ is said to have reconciled the two by virtue of certain sufferings which he, considered as a partaker of the higher nature, submitted to endure in the lower one.

Now this hypothesis has quite as little justification in the letter of Scripture as it has in its spirit or reason: but before proving this, I wish to show

you very conclusively that if you admit the foundation-fact which sectarianism claims, namely the intrinsic hostility of the divine and human natures, you completely undermine the peculiar remedial virtue which this same sectarianism assigns to the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

For if an essential hostility obtains between God and man, then any suffering which a divine person should experience in the human nature, might perhaps express truly enough his own private conviction of the demerit of that nature, but could by no means be viewed as a general expression on the part of the nature itself, since he was only a partaker or subject of the nature, and by no means absorbed it in his own personality. But even in this case, even within the limits of his own personality, it is impossible to see how the sufferings Christ endured can express the *reconciliation* of the two warring natures. It is simply a misuse of language to say that his human nature could be *reconciled* by the imposition of *sufferings;* and if we make the divine nature the one to be reconciled, and especially through the sufferings of the other, we not merely make the human nature the superior element in the transaction, because the immutable one, but we expressly contradict both the entire scope and the specific language of scripture, which represent man as the party to be reconciled. Of course we can admit the fact that Jesus suffered

submissively all the evils which the hand of man laid upon him; but unless you look upon him simply as a symbolic or representative person, it is impossible to regard this fact as expressing a reconciliation of the two natures. If you look upon him as a mere private person, whose significance is purely obvious or bounded by the literal incidents of his history, then his sufferings have no meaning beyond himself, and express no general fact of his nature but only a feature of his private individuality. They drop at once from a scientific or rational, to a mere personal, interest. They are facts not of life but of disease.

Besides: the circumstance which sectarianism makes chiefly prominent in its view of Christ's atonement, namely, the dignity of the sufferer, does really destroy the validity it assigns to his sufferings. For the human nature being the one which is to become reconciled or submissive, then of course such submission can only take place when it is self-prompted or spontaneous, and not coerced by the influence of the higher nature. Precisely in so far therefore as you assume the Christ to have acted from the prompting of his divine nature, do you deny even to his own private biography the reconciliation of the two natures, leaving the human exactly *in statu quo.* The difference on this point between our modern theology and the scriptures is very significant. The latter

invariably make the force of Christ's suffering whatever that force may be, dependent upon his human nature; the former upon his divine.

Thus the sectarian hypothesis of an essential hostility between God and man, irreparably damages the only view of the Christian atonement which it is ever employed to support.

But the hypothesis has no foundation in the gospels. The gospels nowhere assert an essential or intrinsic contrariety between the divine and human natures. They indeed assert the fullest possible contrariety between God on the one side, and human nature as legally exhibited—exhibited in subjection to outward law—on the other. But to what end was this done? In order to cut man off from hope towards God? By no means, but rather to give him hope by denying the law to be a fit witness of their relation. Surely I need not insist on this point. Every reader at all familiar with the scriptures, perfectly knows that the whole scope of Christ's mission was to deliver those who were under legal condemnation, who through fear of the death denounced by conscience or the moral law, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. You may search the gospels through, and you will find no intimation that Christ conceived of any danger to man from God. He does not offer himself to man as a shield against the divine displeasure. On the contrary, he offers himself as a

minister and proof of that perfect and unchanging love of God, which the spirit of their law truly revealed, but which the absurd and superstitious glosses and traditions that overlaid its letter, greatly obscured. Jesus and his apostles did indeed denounce the divine vengeance upon the *rulers* of the people. Why? For their infractions of the moral law? By no means. But only for the bigoted and calumnious opposition they manifested towards himself, towards the humane and beneficent truths he came to avouch concerning the universal Father, and His relations to man.

No, I repeat it, you may search the gospels through without finding one single word to justify the popular misconception of Christianity, considered *as a system of relief provided for man against the divine displeasure.* As I have already said you will find ample stress laid in the New Testament upon the corruption of human nature as measured by the moral law, or the finite conscience of man. But the inference the apostles deduced from this revelation of the law, was—not that man was thus viewed by God, and should therefore indulge no hope towards Him, but only, that the *natural conscience*, or the moral law, *was a wholly unsuitable bond of connection* between God and man, and therefore offered no disparagement to the claims of Jesus, as the true Christ. The law was made an incessant weapon of assault upon

Jesus, being disingenuously perverted to the support of that corrupt morality and those inhuman distinctions between brethren, which he steadfastly denounced. The scribe and the Pharisee, who sat in the seat of Moses and enjoyed the highest honors of the nation, maintained their place and authority by a zealous profession of regard for the Mosaic law and institutions, so that he who criticised the temper of their rule, always found himself dexterously tripped up as the enemy of Moses and the prophets, and so exposed to popular prejudice and hatred. It is an infernal game, and is played as heartily though not so successfully in this day as in that when it nailed Jesus to the accursed tree. For he fell a victim to nothing but this canting conservatism, the conservatism of a set of men who, in his own words, laid grievous and intolerable burdens on the shoulders of other people, but for their own part never touched a finger to them.

Jesus and his apostles looked then this specious pretence of the successors of Moses, full in the face. They said, "Yes, the laws and institutions of Moses are good, but you have made them of no effect, have made them utterly worthless by your traditions. For the law of Moses breathes nothing but perfect good-will to all mankind. It denounces every species of injustice and oppression between man and man. Yet you do not hesitate to make use of this humane and peaceful law, to originate and

foment the most arrogant and unjust distinctions between yourselves and others. To be sure you reply very glibly, that these others are sinners, inasmuch as they break the law, while you are righteous, inasmuch as you keep it, and that you are therefore justified in exalting yourselves above them. But this is a fatal mistake. For the law is not kept unless you keep it in spirit. You may be blameless in every literal commandment it enjoins, and yet if this obedience be accompanied by a spirit of contempt or unkindness towards those who do not keep it, you violate it in spirit much more flagrantly than they do whom you foolishly denounce as sinners. These very persons themselves, the objects of your contempt and hatred, are spiritually much better affected to the law than you are, inasmuch as the modest man is more humane than the haughty one, or as he to whom much is forgiven, loves more than he who feels himself above forgiveness. Thus the law itself of which you boast refuses to give you shelter, and points you out in fact as its most signal scandal."

Here it was, and here alone, that we find Jesus alleging any contrariety between God and man. It was only when confronting the Pharisaic or sectarian man, the man who trusted in himself that he was righteous and despised others, that we find him denouncing the divine vengeance. And you see at a glance how necessarily he must denounce it in

that direction, how in the exact ratio of his humanitary sympathies he must have detested the pride, which could find an argument of its own elevation in the degradation of another. For here was a law every word of which expressed a perfect love for mankind, a law which covered all the relations of man to man, not even omitting his relations to the dumb animals which did him service, and then forbade everything like injustice or oppression in any of these relations. It was a law prescribing the nicest and exactest justice between each and all men: and hence the spirit of it, the intention of it, the temper of it, could only be a spirit or temper of perfect love. But as the law confessedly came from God, of course its spirit must be the spirit of God. With what face therefore could they claim to be God's children, or what is the same thing, partakers of his spirit, who habitually regarded the law as a ground of distinction over others, and so perverted it to the service of every vain and malignant lust. Such persons were rather the children of the devil or the very opposite of God, and would find themselves forever excluded from his kingdom when it came.

I recently attended the obsequies of a friend, who was not technically a member of the church, but who nevertheless I believe had a great traditional respect for it. The minister made prayer, the especial burden of which was that God "would

give the survivors a realizing sense of sin." No petition met my ear, nor any shadow of petition, that we might outgrow this puerile fear of death, and look upon its pompous ceremonial as a solemn cheat, but merely the iterate and reiterate desire that we might have "a profound conviction of our sinfulness in God's sight, and might cordially view ourselves as miserable offenders," etc. etc. Such was the sole tenor of the exercises both precatory and hortatory. Meanwhile a sullen gloom invested the assembly, and the face of the unconscious corpse, over which had gathered an expression of comely and placid repose amounting almost to sweetness, alone shone responsive to the hopeful texts of holy writ, which ever and anon gemmed the dismal night of the burial-service. The face of the dead seemed actually to beam a soft rebuke upon the surpliced infidelity which gave it so cheerless a requiem.

Surely the conspicuous purpose of Christ's mission was to discharge man of a conscience of sin, and I cannot withhold my amazement therefore at the audacity which asks in his name a continuance, much more an aggravation of this conscience. I know not indeed how I could contrive a more flagrant insult to the memory of Jesus than to suppose his glory needing to be enhanced by the contrast of my shame. This is the very temper which in our sane moments we ascribe to the

devil, and which accordingly when detected in ourselves, we at once remit to him. Can we not do better then than attribute to Jesus the central trait of his great adversary? I read over his history from beginning to end, and I find a depth of human tenderness in it which I cannot find in any other life of man, and which fills me with an emulation so salutary as to give me a fellow-feeling even with the worm of the dust. Why, the vilest of the vile came to this man as the babe comes to its mother, fearing no rebuke, expecting indeed the milk of an unprecedented consolation. It was only this which gave him his divine charm, that he opened up a realm of peace in man, where the thunders of conscience were never heard, and where the arrows of a superstitious and inhuman faith fell powerless. He spake as no man spake before, nor scarcely since, in that he revealed a life to which sin and infirmity were all unknown, because it exhibited the infinite and finite—God and man—in intimate unity. Take away this majesty from Jesus, take away the revelation and ratification he offered of the soul's deepest life, and you take away all his distinctive power, all the power which he does not share with every puny moralist that every chattered, with every petty police magistrate that ever consigned a felon to the gallows.

I do not hesitate to say that the most inefface-

able conviction of every human soul, is that of its inward righteousness, its own intimate alliance with God, whatever be the outward defilement it has contracted. No one not an idiot justifies himself outwardly, or pretends that his outward relations are by any means equal to his aspirations. No sensible man feels that his circumstances befit the ideal he worships. Nor, while the race of man peoples the earth, will any one I presume account himself fully to have actualized his ideal: for at that rate the process of life would confess itself stopped. But every man affirms his inward righteousness, and clings to it with a tenacity which all the forces of the universe intensify.

The duties we impose upon ourselves towards God and man are a standing proof of this habit, are a standing evidence of our inward worth, for whence do they derive their force, their obligatoriness, but from the soul? Why do you not blame the animal, or call him a sinner? Because being destitute of an inward selfhood, you acquit him of self-respect, or of having the control of his own actions. But because man has this inward being, or acts from himself, you expect him to do rightly without any outward compulsion. Hence you blush at the mention of reward for doing your duty, because reward would imply that the duty was done without the soul's delight.

So too the self-prostration and denial which a man

exhibits under the operation of the ritual religious sentiment, is in every case an expression of his inmost and vital self-repose. If he really believed himself the morsel of meanness his confessions indicate—if he really believed that God saw him in the abhorrent guise under which he is pleased to paint himself—he would instantly wither and shrivel as a plant whose roots are imbedded in frost. He would vanish into instant unconsciousness.

No, these elaborate confessions are nature's mild resource against an infantile or sensuous theology. Our infantile theology, in identifying us with the outward or finite life, identifies us with all the ignorance, all the folly, all the vice and uncleanness that mark the early stages of that life. It does not say to us, "Your true life, your real selfhood is from God, is divine, and can take no contamination from this lower life by which it is merely seeking to manifest itself." On the contrary it says that this lower life, so replete with baseness, so simply passive, is our inseparable life, and that God views us therefore with abhorrence, and rejects us from all alliance with himself. A very pretty temper of mind, for men to ascribe to the fountain of all perfection! God angry with a person for being empty of all goodness, of all knowledge, of all power! Angry with a person for not displaying His own exclusive attributes, a

person too whom He himself summons into existence, and who therefore is completely dependent upon Himself for all that he has been, is, or shall be! What incredible petulance! What incredible inhumanity to ascribe to God! I would rather be a pagan suckled in a creed outworn, than such a Christian. I would renounce my own father as cheerfully as I would eat my daily bread, did I conceive him capable of a petty malignity like this. And yet I should be infinitely ashamed to assign any original virtue to my father, to assign him any virtue which was not very purely though faintly typical of the divine.

It is in order therefore I repeat to escape the trammels of this lisping theology, that our divine instincts set us upon the construction of a *pietistic* righteousness. When our creeds shut us up in nature, and remorselessly subject us to her doom, the soul's unconquerable instinct bids us construct a righteousness out of the acknowledgment of these very truths, and look upon ourselves as justified if not by morality at least by piety, if not by our acts of virtue, why then at least by our humility and self-abasement on these accounts before God. For the soul disclaims the imputation of evil as the azure depths of heaven disclaim the clouds. The clouds are born of and belong to the earth alone. They may indeed obscure the heavens for a while to earthly sight, but we have only to lift

up the eye of science, to discern a stainless ether, and a repose incapable of perturbation. So the soul of man sheds the stain of evil, making it attach only to his outward and transient and circumferential self, which self accordingly he daily disciplines and renounces from the ground of a central purity. In fact the bare confession of a wrong action, whenever genuine, is a tacit assertion of the subject's general righteousness, for he can only feel the action to be wrong by virtue of its contrariety to his habitual spirit. If the action had not been exceptional with him, if it had been habitual to him, he could not have sincerely disapproved it, for no man could live, believing the *ordinary* tenor of his life to be wrong.

So fares it then with the old Sectarianism! It utterly misconceives the mission of Christ in supposing it to imply the degradation of humanity, or an essential antagonism between God and man. Instead of affirming the testimonies of science, and vindicating as man's unquestionable birth-right every accession of dignity and power thence accruing to him, it seeks to perpetuate that legal separation between God and man which Christ annulled, by endowing this same Christ with an eternal literality, and so imposing him as another outward law upon humanity. The effect of this teaching is to inflame instead of mitigate hostile relations between God and man. For it is not possible that any

person can permanently interpose between them in the way of holding them united, save upon the tacit convention that the parties thus conjoined are intrinsically unworthy of each other's confidence. God and man stand in the relation of creator and creature, of fountain and stream, and therefore to suppose any foreign intervention requisite to enforce their perfect amity, is simply to falsify the total truth of their relation.

Such being the main defect of the ritual church, it is bound either to assume an advanced position on this vital topic, or else decline before the light of science as a farthing candle declines in the blaze of the mid-day sun. Among us it is wisely accommodating itself to the new spirit. For the ascendancy of the democratic principle here modifies theology not less than other things. Having no establishment, our clergy cannot control, but must always follow, the popular inspiration, unless indeed they become teachers of science, in which case of course their eminent position would no longer be merely typical but real. Hence the tendency we perceive on all hands towards Congregationalism or the throwing off ecclesiastical responsibility, and the recognition of the individual consciousness in religion. The same tendency is seen in Europe in the spread of the "voluntary principle," and the intestine commotion which is rending both the Roman and English churches

asunder. Nor, I take it, will the tendency halt until it become swallowed up in the distinctive genius of that new and better economy, call it Church or call it State, which is properly the unity and fulfilment of both, for its function is to bring down heaven to earth, or what is the same thing, to sanctify the secular life of man.

LECTURE V.

THE OLD AND NEW THEOLOGY.

PART SECOND.

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EVERY attentive reader of the gospels will have remarked, that the controversy between Jesus and his antagonists, was a controversy between the most enlarged humanity on the one side, and a well-established orthodoxy on the other. The battle which he fought, was the battle of universal man against the principalities and powers of this world, who sought to make humanity a stepping-stone to their exaltation. It was not as commonly reported, a battle between God on the one side and man on the other: for the Christ invariably declared God to be the unchangeable friend of man, infinitely more ready to shew him favor than man was to ask it. It was a battle between God considered to be thus friendly to universal man, on the one side, and a set of men, or rather a nation of men, on the other side, who arrogated

His special friendship to themselves, on the ground of a certain ritual righteousness which distinguished them from the rest of mankind.

In fact, the doctrine of the Christ is nothing more and nothing less than a revelation of the *essential* unity of God and man. He acknowledged no other mission than the vindication of humanity from the stigma of unrighteousness before God, no other joy than to persuade the conventionally vilest of men of the infinite righteousness he had in God. No matter what the occasion may have been, you find him invariably identifying himself with the interests of the most enlarged humanity, and ready to sacrifice every private tie which in any way involved a denial of the universal brotherhood of the race. But what is the use of dwelling on the point? Every one who reads the scripture for original instruction, and not merely for the confirmation of some traditional opinion, recognizes in Jesus the God-anointed champion of humanity against established injustice and superstition.

If then the mission of the Christ claimed this humanitary character, we may be very sure that the sovereign touchstone of his church will be its possession of the same spirit. We may be very sure that the interests of humanity will occupy the first place with it, and personal or private interests a very subordinate place.

Suppose then we apply this test to the existing

or sectarian church: we shall at once discover its complete destitution of the spirit of Christ. Instead of a zeal for humanity in it, you perceive only a zeal for the person of Jesus himself. In fact, as I shewed on a former occasion, the church makes Jesus under the name of a mediator, a perpetual barrier to the cordial intercourse of God and man. Let me make this charge plain by an example. Suppose me, then, influenced by the traditions and customs of the society in which I live, to apply to any of our clergy for the benefits of church communion. He thereupon proceeds to question me as to my fitness, and in the course of his inquiry seeks above all to be satisfied on this point, namely, whether I am willing to receive the divine blessing only for the sake or through the merits of Jesus Christ. He tells me that God abhors me personally, and will not look upon me apart from Jesus. He is not content to tell me what Christ himself tells, that there is no such thing as merit in God's sight, or any ground of boasting in one man over others, since all goodness comes from God. Far from it! A doctrine like this would prostrate the wall of separation between the church and the world, giving the latter despised personage in fact a very fair chance of salvation. But he is very careful to tell me what Christ does not tell me, namely, that God entertains a personal aversion to me, that I am in fact in my natural

person intolerably odious to him, and can expect no particle of favor at his hands which is not purchased by the expiatory sufferings of Jesus. This is the essential rallying point of orthodoxy, and accordingly if my memory prove well-posted up here, my way is tolerably clear to church-membership.

Now you perceive from this example that orthodoxy here interposes a third person between God and my soul, between my life-fountain and myself. It does not merely give me the pith or philosophic substance of the doctrine concerning the Christ, to enlarge my knowledge of the divine perfection, but it represents this identical person who lived and died near two thousand years ago, as still standing in bodily form between God and myself, and modifying every instinctive impulse felt by either party towards the other. Such is the exact pretension of orthodoxy in behalf of Jesus Christ. He exhausts the worth of human nature, so that no man created by God can ever appear tolerable to God, unless shining with his reflected lustre. It is a dry personal pretension, wholly unrelieved, wholly unenriched, by ideas. That is, I am not told of a universal or humanitary meaning under this Jewish fact, for the sake of which meaning it is worth my while to cherish the memory of the fact. By no means. The fact is left in its naked historical detail; is held to be of a purely private

or personal significance; is held in truth to be an exceptional fact to the whole history of the race. Nothing similar or second to it has ever taken place. Other men have died, and there was an end of their personal consequence, an end to their personal relations with men in the flesh. But this man is represented as a still living person, as putting forth a claim upon the obedience of living men so purely personal, and therefore arbitrary or irrational, as to confess itself backed by the alternative of endless suffering.

Such is the sum of orthodoxy, the setting up a personal pretension. Instead of abiding the test therefore of a conformity to the spirit of Christ, to that spirit of humanity which animated all his labors, that spirit of peace on earth and good will to all men which was exhibited as much in his condemnation of the Pharisee as in his clemency to the publican; it completely violates it by converting Jesus into a monster of self-seeking, and turning all the grace of the gospel into a mere argument of his personal supremacy. It represents the whole beneficent work of the Christ to have been undertaken with a view to his own ultimate glory. Whatever mercy may have been in it, no one shall reap the benefit of it without an entire prostration of his personal will to that of Jesus. For mercy was not the end of the work, it was only the means to an end, which end was the

establishing his personal empire over the human mind.

It is extraordinary that sectarianism does not observe the complete contradiction it offers the gospel, by this stupid personal idolatry of the Christ. Nothing but the blinding force of prejudice studiously fostered explains it. For suppose I should go to-morrow to any of our churches, commending the temper of a certain man, who, having at much inconvenience to himself, rescued a little child from drowning, should thereupon claim the child's future personal service, on pain of heavy suffering: would not their God-given intelligence instantly pronounce the man's temper diabolic, and absolve them of any emotion towards him but that of hearty disgust? Yet how inconsistent all this would be! For this is the precise temper our orthodox standards ascribe to the Christ. They represent him as at first doing us a signal favor, but then as taking advantage of our gratitude, to bind us to his unlimited personal service under pain of unspeakable suffering.

Certainly nothing can be more inhuman than this pretension. It outrages every instinct of humanity, to ascribe perfection to a person who claims my worship under penalty of death, under penalty of everlasting misery. It is a purely diabolic claim, which all humanity disowns with loathing and contempt. In fact orthodoxy lives the

little life yet left it only by a dexterous appeal to the sensuous imagination, only by flattering the instincts of a low prudence or expediency. Contemning the spirit of humanity, all that is best and loveliest in humanity disowns it. It holds no longer the ghost of a sceptre in its shrivelled and trembling clutch. The whole business of the world transacts itself without it. Look at any of the great theatres on which the drama of life is enacting, say the American Congress, or the British House of Commons. Does any sign appear that God is not in direct relation with the interests there discussed, that He is only remotely concerned with the immense issues there evolving? Does not every man there feel that in advocating the truth he perceives, and demolishing veteran prejudice and error, he is fighting God's battle as directly as it was ever fought on earth? Suppose any one to arise on any of these arenas to interpose a bit of formal theology: would it not act like the touch of a torpedo, palsying the entire life of the Assembly? Now in no propriety of speech can God be styled the author of palsies, because He is the source of life, and hence that must be a very inverse manifestation of His truth, whose invariable effect would be to paralyze the honest business of the world.

But every private man in the tenor of his daily life, registers his practical contempt of orthodoxy.

No man goes to market, goes upon 'change, enters his study, invites his friend to dinner, educates his children, even pays for his pew in church, or sends his parson a Christmas turkey, believing that God is indifferent to his way of doing these things, and sees him altogether by proxy. No! the most orthodox professor in town refutes his profession every hour and every instant, by aspiring to direct relation with Deity, or what is the same thing, endeavoring to shape his conduct according to the dictates of perfect wisdom. Every man practically affirms the reality of his own life, and whether religious or profane expects you to suffer if you seriously diminish his enjoyment of it. The proxy relation of God to him never enters his head save by an effort of memory, and can never become consubstantiate with his intellect any more than a stone taken into his stomach can become consubstantiate with his blood.

The doctrinal changes also taking place within the sects themselves, once the strongholds of Calvinism, in announcing the decrepitude of sectarian christianity, announce also that the field is progressively clearing for the great final controversy between humanity on the one hand as represented by science, and spiritual despotism in high places on the other, as represented by the Roman Church, and its principle of outward authority. The church of England is becoming roused even before our

eyes to shake off every vestige of this clinging abomination, and assert the inherent superiority of man to ecclesiastical domination. The doctrines of grace, as they were once called by that subtle irony wherewith nature manages to christen every false pretension, are completely exploded in all the length and breadth of *New* England. And the Presbyterian church in our midst is already divided between the old and new faith, one half contending for the sinner's unlimited ability to repent whenever he pleases, thus slyly affirming the intrinsic dignity of human nature. For it is absurd to suppose any one capable of repenting of the evil he has done, unless his heart be really uncontaminated by it.

Such then is the condition of the old Sectarianism. It is without a living root, without any the least basis in the private or public necessities of humanity. It has indeed a certain visible establishment, a certain tangible personality in the number of dependents who at present derive a living from it: men of estimable character no doubt, and well entitled to be heard in defence of a parent who at least is no way niggardly to them. Of course I except these interests. So far as they are concerned the church has yet a function in the earth, a function however inherited from the past. But apart from that it is a total impertinence, a total irrelevancy to humanity. Professing to be

identified with the vital and universal interests of man, it allows the whole current of his aspirations and thoughts, almost the entire sweep of his legislation and action, to avert themselves from it, and is obliged to put up with the tribute of a brief and extremely formal sunday recognition.

The prime mark then of a true church, will be its conformity to the spirit of Christ, its regard to the great humanitary end he had in view, rather than the promotion of his mere personal consequence. Every modest man disdains personal homage. No modest man desires to be regarded in any other light than as a minister or servant of that divine Humanity which tabernacles in all men equally though variously, and which therefore forbids all personal supremacies, all private boasting. What could be more abhorrent to your feelings, what crucifixion more poignant, than to find a crowd of persons about your steps every day, solicitous to worship you, or to do your bidding simply because it was yours? Would you not feel the incessant insult, the incessant betrayal, offered to that divinity which was common to you both, and indignantly spurn therefore a homage implying your votary's degradation? To be sure you would, if you have any spark of manly modesty in you, if your bosom has ever known an emotion of that true humility which springs from an acknowledgment of the sole being of God.

Why then offer such a homage to the memory of Jesus, to whom it is particularly preposterous since he disclaimed on all occasions the pursuit of his own glory. He came to do the will of the universal Father, and surely it cannot be his will that one brother should enjoy the servile and sycophantic devotion of all the rest. What sort of brotherhood is that which stands in the perpetual and enforced subordination of one to another? And what sort of paternity would that be which tolerated for a moment such a fraternity? The mussulman exclaims fifty times a day, Great is Allah, and Mahomet is his Prophet! Do you suppose this sort of recognition agreeable to a true humanitary saint, like Jesus? Do you suppose it pleases him to hear you say Lord, Lord, day by day and year after year, and yet persistently fail to do the things he *spiritually* commands to be done, namely, the unloosing of every yoke, the disuse of superstition, the abolition of poverty, of disease, of sin, in short the satisfaction of every human want? If so, then my friend, let me assure you that no service ever offered to any Egyptian task-master was ever so poorly paid, as yours is going to be at the hands of this same Jesus.

For remember that he distinctly and on all occasions made the humanitary temper of his followers the sole test of discipleship, the sole principle of discrimination to be observed on that great day

when he should come again in all his paternal glory to separate between the sheep and the goats. You will easily recall the very impressive passage in Matthew's gospel, where he represents himself as a shepherd dividing the sheep from the goats, and describes the consternation of his professed followers in being cast out of his kingdom, because under a very sincere and bustling devotion to his personal glory, they had masked an utter insensibility to his spirit, had utterly failed to honor him because they had not honored equally the humblest of men. Not those he says who call him Lord, or confess him personally, but they who do the will of God, or confess him spiritually, shall be accepted in that day.

Think of that, professing Christians, you who have been wont to esteem yourselves the only friends of Christ, and to pity the poor Hottentot and South Sea Islander as outcasts from his knowledge; it is you who are going into everlasting contempt, not they. It is you who shall weep and gnash your teeth to find yourselves excluded from the divine kingdom, and every despicable and dishonored thing admitted. How often have I heard our thoughtless clergy read this passage, and others of like import, and then go on to apply its denunciations to the harlot, the thief, the drunkard, or other obvious and conceded reprobate. They are extremely fond of doing this, extremely fond

of representing Christ as peculiarly pitiless not merely towards the reprobate portion of the community, but towards the reputable classes also who do not make a *profession* of serving him. They represent the business of Christ upon earth to have been to get himself honored, to build up a great name, and accordingly are lavish of threats towards all those who feel no interest in that enterprise. Verily they have *had* their reward!

Never since the world has stood was a fair fame more outraged than that of Jesus has been by ecclesiastical usage. Look at his gospel. Do you find the slightest token there of his having any quarrel with the conceded sinner? Does not his whole quarrel lie on the contrary with the conceded saint, with him who in the eyes of all men was righteous? Do you find him on any occasion promising to honor those who made much of his person—promising to favor those who should call themselves by his name? On the contrary does he not, whenever looking forward to his second or spiritual coming, pronounce that profession or calling the one thing odious and dangerous? Truly it is so. His whole controversy is represented as lying with his professing followers, those who profess to be the children of God. He had no quarrel in his first coming but with those who professed to be God's people *par excellence*, and despised the claims of others. So also he

represents himself at his second coming as having no quarrel but with those who under the profession of honoring him, have only heaped upon him all manner of personal adulation, all manner of interested personal sycophancy. How should it be otherwise? How should the true Christ or anointed of God, the messenger of the universal Father, entertain any quarrel with mankind at large? Why, you perhaps may say, mankind at large is vicious and debauched; mankind at large is overrun with foul lusts of murder, avarice, revenge, lying, and so forth. Granted: but do you conceive this state of things to constitute a just *casus belli*, a just ground of anger on the part of God? I, for my part, do not.

It seems to me that only a very dubious God would feel anger under these circumstances. The God who owned mankind it appears to me, could feel under these circumstances no other emotion than that of the tenderest pity, and an instant resolve to do all He possibly could for their relief, or improvement. At all events such was the attitude invariably ascribed to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, by his illustrious son and servant. According to him God had no other feeling but infinite compassion for the vilest of reprobates, no other feeling but infinite scorn for the sanctity that deemed itself comparatively acceptable to Him. God's quarrel is never with the sin

of mankind, but only with its righteousness. Sin offers no obstruction to the advent of His righteousness. But if men are already righteous, they need no righteousness of His bestowal. The whole need not a physician, but only they that are sick.

You cannot conceive this point too sharply. The one thing which God hates is never the sin of mankind, but only its righteousness. For its sin is always remediable; but its righteousness never. *If ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say we see; therefore your sin remaineth.* Perhaps you will refer me to many passages of the scripture wherein God is represented by his prophets and messengers as denouncing sin. Undoubtedly, but always the sins of his professing people, in order to prove them not his people. The scriptures show the design of God from the beginning to have been, to be glorified in humanity, to be revealed as one with universal man, and to disown therefore any special progeny. Thus it exhibits Him throughout as utterly exhausting and shaming the pretensions of any particular people to be considered his in any sense wherein others were not his. Instead of a blessing therefore, the religious preëminence of any nation has been an invariable curse to it, as involving mental states which demand implacable judgments. It is a fearful thing to be self-called to the service of the highest, or what is the same thing, to aspire

to a nearness of communion such as others may not boast. Farewell in such case hours of ease and sweet domestic bliss, and welcome only laborious days, days of cruel privation to nature, of cruel blight to all her soft endearments, of utter death in fact to all her blooming and varied life! Look at the Jew, that touching monument of religious constancy, that riven and blasted column towering still above all time to shew how deceitful is the favor of the gods. Certainly the day will come when according to old prophecy the Jew shall be esteemed humanity's truest soldier; when the thanks of all hearts shall be given him for that long night of ignominy and sorrow he has endured, standing alone in the breach between God and man, calling upon God to hear him and be faithful, while God remains forever inflexible and pitiless, as knowing no other way to help man than through man himself.

The church of the Future then, or the spiritual church, will know Christ no more after the flesh. It will treat all those questions touching his personal character and endowments, all those questions the object of which is to postulate for him a superior intrinsic worth to all other men, as the merest gossip, and plant itself instead only upon his representative or humanitary significance. It will indeed know no man any more in his mere outward and differential character, in those respects

wherein he stands finited by his own body and his fellow-man; but only in his inward and ideal character, in those respects wherein he stands infinited, or freed from all outward law, by the spirit and power of the living God.

Thus, the true church, or what is better, God's true life in man, will vacate all ritual worship, such worship as is prescribed by the will of another merely, and does not spring from the heart of the worshipper. Ritual worship is essentially dramatic, has always an end outside of itself, never expresses the real desire of the heart, but simply the interested deference of one will to another. It is essentially servile or mercenary, reflecting not the assured life of the votary, not his fullness of joy and peace, but his present destitution of life, and his hope of eventually realizing it through the bounty of another. It is a price we pay either to purchase a favor not yet granted, or else to secure one already received, and is therefore by its very nature altogether prudential. Thus if you go into any of our churches, you find everywhere immense stress laid upon the rites which Christ or his apostles are variously alleged to have enjoined upon our observance, such as baptism, the Lord's supper, a demure behavior on sundays, regular attendance upon public worship, and habits of private prayer; and you will be informed how important it is for you to observe this ritual, if you

would not have your name left unwritten in the book of life. Thus the argument by which the worship is enforced, is never its adaptation either to your natural affections or your taste, but exclusively its bearing upon your future destiny.

But if the coming church, the coming life, thus vacates ritual worship, it will also vacate ritual righteousness, or that sort of righteousness which flows from ritual obedience. In the expiring church the highest title to consideration lies in a devout habit, a habit of devotion to some will above one's own. In that church no sanctity is so venerated, as that which consists in an address and behavior scrupulously designed to please some other party than the subject himself, namely God, practically considered not as the friend of man endowing him with all things, but as his enemy, exacting a certain tribute on pain of endless excoriation. Hence the very highest sanctity may be compassed in that church, and has often been compassed, by men of the most truculent character, men of so little sweetness either natural or acquired, that you would wonder at any divine power pretending to save them, men of pride and sleepless ambition, with every lust starved down to ferocity, and held in chain like so many hounds, ready to spring forth when the hour of deliverance sounded, and run riot over the universe of creation.

This is too true. The very highest ritual right-

eousness consists with—I am very far indeed from saying that it is generally accompanied by—a heart of impenetrable hardness, an intellect of the utmost tenuity, and a life of complete selfishness. I have known distinguished fathers and mothers in our Christian Israel whose presence was like mildew upon flowers, and who sent you away with the feeling of having been defrauded of half your vital electricity. They were fathers that begot nothing but their own vapid arrogance, and mothers that suckled nothing more tender than their own strapping self-conceit. For there is nothing humanizing—nothing elevating—in personal devotion, after you reach a certain stage of culture in the race. It is well for me when my will is purely sensual or devilish—when it insists upon overriding everything to compass a momentary gratification—when in short I am an infant in culture and manifest the disposition of an infant—then it is well for me to obey the will of a superior. Devotion then is both profitable and honorable. And in the earliest periods of human history accordingly we see it most abounding.

But when Art is fairly born, when nature has begun to evince her cordial subjection to man, and men perceive in themselves a depth of divine resources which infallibly engenders self-respect, they then begin to perceive an essential contrariety between the worship which God approves and that

approved by men, between that worship which springs up spontaneously in the soul, and legitimates or seeks every *living* form of expression, and that which is prescribed by tradition and enforced only by considerations of future profit and loss. They perceive that this devotion to the will of another person—this devotion to God considered as an outside and therefore finite person—was adapted only to a very sensuous and puerile development of life, when they were incapable of self-control, and were held consequently in bondage to the beggarly elements of this world's wisdom, in bondage to tutors and governors, and chains, and dungeons, and gibbets, and all the other machinery of brute force which still disfigures the earth. They perceive too that this devotion kept pace always with a very faulty behavior; that they were never so assiduous at church, or at prayer-meeting, or other technical channel of grace, as when they had been driving an exceedingly close bargain with their neighbor, or behaving with some other peculiar obliquity, which suggested their desert of a good whipping. Their devotional zeal in fact was always in the exact measure of the baseness they attributed to themselves. Thus they perceive that this ritual worship is adapted only to the sensuous and servile mind, only to that period of human development when appetite and passion are inflamed by compression, by the want of proper grati-

fication, when genius is still undeveloped or dormant, and when self-respect consequently lies concealed within the rude husks of an Ishmaelitish self-will.

It is impossible when men begin to apprehend that God is a spirit, and that his kingdom accordingly is exclusively within them, that they should not speedily dismiss that sanctity which stands in meats and drinks, and the observance of sabbaths and baptisms and sacraments. When I perceive God to be no longer a mere outside and finite person, but the very life of my life, more inseparable from my inmost self than my soul is from my body; when I perceive that neither height nor depth, neither the highest heavens nor the lowest hells have power to sever me from his profuse and benignant presence, it seems a purely superfluous and therefore ridiculous thing, to attempt commending myself to him by any thing I can do, especially by any thing I can do in the way of favorably differencing myself from other persons. I am profoundly ashamed of such differences. I hurry them out of sight with palpitating haste, lest the great God behold and spue me out of His mouth for thinking to purchase His priceless bounty, for deeming that His holy ghost may be bought and sold.

How sad it is to witness the complacency with which the sectarian heaps up his family-worship,

his private devotions, his social concerts of prayer, his sunday exercises, fancying full surely that thus and not otherwise does one's soul fatten for the skies. Of course sincerity always attracts your respect wherever it appears: but if superstition mean the worship of that of which one is ignorant, where can we find it in livelier play than here? Would one ever dream that this man was worshipping the giver of life? Would it not rather seem that he was worshipping the withholder of it, from whom nevertheless he was resolved one day to extract it by the irresistible forceps of prayer? And how more than sad is it to witness the way in which our sectarian newspapers *exploit* this ignorance, and fill their coffers week after week by pandering to every virulent form of Pharisaism. It was but the other day I encountered in one of them, a remark of this nature in an article on amusements. I am answerable for the language, but the sentiment is strictly preserved. "Would you like, dear reader, to die in a ball-room or theatre? Would you like to go up meeting your Judge, arrayed in the garments of profane pleasure, with a jest upon your lip, and a heart full of frenzied mirth?"

Of course for the *comfort* of the thing, one would wish to die neither in a theatre nor a church, nor any other public place, but at home under the eye of his familiar friends. But for

the morality of the thing, I do not see why one should meet God less cheerfully in a ball-dress than in a shroud. If God be really the great human heart which He claims to be, and which at bottom all men worship, I see no reason to suppose Him discriminating between Liston and Whitfield, between sock and surplice, between fool's cap and mitre. Does this virtual defamer of the divine Humanity suppose God capable of insulting a taste which He himself implants, the taste for amusement, even for the most frolicksome and unrestrained amusement too upon occasion? Does he suppose God so essentially treacherous, as to allow a poor dependent creature of His own to visit a place, in which it would compromise his everlasting welfare to die, and then cut him off there like a forlorn rat in a trap? Is the God of our worship then after all of a feline instead of a human quality, and does the highest religious performance lie in watching and dodging him like a mere grimalkin? Is it the aim of the sectarian always to escape the divine hand, and never to fall into it? Conceptions like these, however Christian they may be in name, are at bottom only a baptized Paganism. Surely a man should be ashamed to worship a being of inferior quality to himself. Surely he should be ashamed to worship anything short of essential and perfect Man.

I know not how the current Pharisaism affects

you, my hearer, but I, who possibly have been more familiar with it, and have known its deadly power to sow discord between man and his inmost life, hate it as I hate the obscene jaws of hell. In the exact ratio of one's faith in God's unsullied love, must be his loathing of the way in which it is daily and devoutly blasphemed by these untiring caterers to popular bigotry and cant. Rather than that our children should grow up to the inheritance of these falsities, rather than that their fair souls should be warped and defaced by these insanities, it were a thousand times better that the very name of God—no longer symbolic of peace and hope for man, but only of his degradation and despair—should be forgotten, and that of the Lord, or perfect man, alone held in reverence.

But even here let us strive to do no injustice. It is not the fault of the worshipper that he offers such base incense to Deity. It is the fault only of the sensuous and unscientific conceptions of Deity in which he has been nourished from infancy. The traditional religion of man, the natural Paganism of the heart, still represents God as he stood pictured to the earliest and rudest imagination of the race, not as a spirit of infinite and universal goodness and beauty—for upon the early earth where were goodness and beauty to be seen?—but as a person like ourselves, finited by a corporeal organization, and having all our own wants over

again, only infinitely intensified in degree. Now one cannot worship God in this personal aspect, and long preserve the lineaments of manhood. If you make man's homage due to a person, no matter whether you call that person God or man, you consign man to spiritual slavery, which is death. For the very meaning of spiritual life, the very meaning of that life wherein man excels the brute, and which is therefore properly called the human life, is that it proceeds from within to without, that it has no outward object or source, but only an inward one. If therefore you conceive of the spiritual subject as living to any outward object, as obeying any law but that of his own spontaneity, as being obliged to consult the will of any other person before he acts or speaks, it is evident that you so far forth deny his spirituality, and bring him back to the base bondage of Nature. He must in that case inevitably cherish the spirit, and betray the manners of a slave, not the easy, careless jollity of the negro, whose master is forbidden by his own interests to exact anything but a limited obedience, but the sad and cowering and mortified demeanor of one who obeys a will which is infinite, and which exacts therefore a *consuming* devotion. But I have been digressing.

The coming church, as I have shewn you, will disallow all ritual righteousness, all that base figurative righteousness which stands in an interested or

servile devotion to the will of another, or flows from foreign prescription. It will disallow all that righteousness which has any respect to the mere personal will of Jesus or Mahomet, of Vishnu or Confucius, and recognize only that which consists in every form of beautiful action, and which flows simply from being a man. The question was once asked by him whom the expiring church professes to honor, What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—as if the possession of his soul were cheaply purchased by the loss of all things beside. Yet the old church treats the human soul as if it were a superfluity, as if it were of no account in comparison with mere bodily joys. For you will observe that although in terms they admit the worth of the soul and propose its salvation, yet if you listen to their explication of the theme, you will find that by the soul they invariably mean the body, and by the salvation of the soul nothing more than deliverance from bodily torment. The soul in man is the inner, animating, and directing force of his body. What gives dignity to man is, that he unlike all other existences possesses a soul, that is to say, finds his principle of action exclusively within him. In the infancy of human culture, in the infancy of Art, this soul, this principle of action in man, is overlaid by the senses, or by the necessity of providing for his bodily and social subsistence; and the machinery which becomes

organized for this purpose, the machinery of government, of classes, of institutions of all sorts, may therefore easily endanger his soul, if he is not on his guard, by itself becoming his principle of action.

It was to save the human soul from this danger that Jesus Christ lived and died, acted and suffered. His life was one unbroken and unfaltering protest in behalf of the human soul, against governments and priesthoods and institutions of all sorts, which arrogated to themselves the right of controlling human action. The kingdom of God, said his antagonists, stands in this and that appointment or institution, in these and those observances. The kingdom of God, said Jesus, comes without any observation, stands in no observances whatever, for it is within you. The time is past, he continued, for these old superstitions, for the worship of God on this mountain or on that, as if he were some physical form limited to time and space. No, God is a spirit, not having flesh and blood therefore, or an external existence, but only an internal one, and accepting consequently only an internal or spiritual worship, a worship which is identical with life, and recognizes therefore no outward law or measure.

I learn from a late number of the North American Review, that Prof. Agassiz, in recently lecturing upon the structure and growth of the cater-

pillar, and its transformation into the chrysalis and butterfly, took occasion from the regularity of the process, to deduce a lesson of shame to man. "The lecturer," says the Reviewer, "particularly directed the attention of his delighted young listeners to the perfect uniformity and regularity in the life of this insect, not an individual deviating from the regular order of his species, or failing to accomplish the ends of his existence. To this regularity, said the Professor, man forms the only lamentable exception in nature. Owing to his freedom he often errs, violates law, and fails to fulfil his destiny. Boys, he continued in a low earnest tone and his peculiarly winning manner, I hope that no one of *you* will fail to accomplish the ends for which he is created, but may you all like the caterpillar, ever live in perfect obedience to all the laws of your being."

The proverb tells us that the good Homer sometimes nods, and it is indeed palpable that Prof. Agassiz has here done great injustice to himself, I will not say as a philosopher, for I presume he makes no claim in that direction, but as a naturalist. It seems to me that if I were a naturalist, and were to find everything in nature completely subject to its control, except man who incessantly rejected its control: if I found that there had always been this precise difference between man and the brute, that the latter instinctively acknow-

ledged the supremacy of nature and the other as instinctively denied it: I could not help concluding that the brute belonged wholly to nature, and man to a sphere above nature. Looking at the human phenomenon I should say, here evidently is something which nature does not contain, something whose origin and destiny fairly transcend the sphere of the senses, or run into the infinite. But I should by no means feel authorized to infer from the circumstance of man's destiny being invisible, that he had power to defeat it. I should say the little caterpillar fulfils its destiny under my eyes. Why may not man fulfil his quite as surely beyond them? The caterpillar obeys his physical organization indeed, and man very often abuses his. But this difference of conduct by no means implies that one fulfils, and the other defeats his destiny; it only implies that they have a totally different destiny, that the destiny of one is natural, and the other supernatural. Such it strikes me, would be the conclusion which an unsophisticated naturalist would come to in the premises. But the temptation now-a-days to sentimentalism is all but irresistible, and poor man consequently once reckoned the image of God, is now happy in being allowed to set off or serve as a foil to the superior glory of the caterpillar.

Suppose you should overhear a caterpillar moralizing, a fine plump specimen perhaps of his race, verg-

ing to the term of his caterpillar existence, declining into the fragile grave of the chrysalis. Suppose you should hear him saying, "What levity, what frivolity attaches to the race of caterpillars! While everything else obeys the laws of its organization and finds repose in death, the caterpillar kicks against its doom, and finally bursts forth a fickle foolish butterfly, disdaining the sober undulations of its old existence, and shaming the decent drab of its former associates by colors of the gaudiest tint. What a lamentable perversity all this argues in the caterpillar, and how vastly his character would be improved if he would simply be content to die caterpillar as he was born caterpillar, and so cease perplexing the level uniformity of nature."

The caterpillar might reason in this way, but surely you would tell him that his murmuring was vain, that the caterpillar could not help throwing off the organization to which he was born, and aspiring through a *quasi* death to a superior existence. You would say to him, it belongs to the caterpillar nature to do this thing, and it makes their glory in the eyes of higher existences that they do it, so that instead of complaining of it you should rejoice in it as your true crown of honor.

So the philosopher would bid the naturalist cease complaining of man's deviations from the control of merely natural and civil law, because these deviations express also *his* invincible destiny. Man's

destiny is supernatural, because his origin is so; and it is only because this destiny has not been scientifically authenticated, because it has been made at best a peradventure, being represented as contingent upon the arbitrary will of other powers, that he has been tempted to assert it in this abnormal and merely destructive way. If our theologic and philosophic naturalists therefore, would cease classing man with caterpillars and kangaroos, and look upon him as destined to tabernacle a higher life than nature's, he would at once and of his own momentum cease to deviate either from natural or social obligation, because his acknowledged spiritual freedom would no longer require that mode of assertion, nor indeed tolerate it.

But what is the use of talking? The expiring church, mother and daughters alike, has chosen its path, and cannot now be turned from it. It has utterly failed to apprehend the temper of its Master, or to second his zeal for the welfare of universal man. Not indeed literally, but spiritually, it has sold its Lord for filthy lucre's sake, has accommodated his doctrine to the support of every political institution which degrades and denies the soul of man, by claiming to itself his whole allegiance. The existence of the soul in man is in fact a mere tradition. Practically the church deems him a mere body. Thus it has completely lost sight of the peculiar hope of Christianity, which was the

establishment of God's kingdom on the earth, or the empire of goodness and truth over the whole field of human relations, and substituted instead the gross and mechanical conception of a bodily resurrection after death, and heavenly happiness secured by simple locomotion, or change of outward place. The consequence of this debasement in the church is, that the human soul is left without a champion, or rather is left to the exclusive championship of the irreligious classes. For as it was of old in the letter, so it is now in the spirit. As Jesus found no favor with the devout and honorable of the earth, as his retinue was chiefly made up of the outcast and disreputable, as his weary feet found no bath so grateful as the tears of a repentant harlot, nor any napkin so soft as her flowing hair, as his truest recognition, his recognition under every circumstance of ignominy and abandonment, even when he hung powerless and expiring on the cross, came from the heart of a thief: so his great doctrine of the supremacy o man to institutions, or of the supreme worth of the soul, being formally denied by the church, finds practical succor and vindication only with those whom the church theoretically despises and excludes, namely, merely secular men, mere men of the world, in some cases men of business, in others men of pleasure, but in both cases alike men who find the principle or end of their action within

themselves, and hold nature and society responsible to them.

Let no one misunderstand me. I surely would be very sorry to say that either the man of business or the man of pleasure has any pretension to be considered the complete man, the man of destiny. I merely say that now while the technical church is faithless to the spirit of its founder and barters its celestial birthright away for a mess of pottage, for the patronage of governments, that spirit is not yet wholly extinct in the earth, but finds a certain shelter, a certain hospitality among the Gentiles, or in the man of purely secular aims, in the man who strives to realize the highest possible enjoyment of the present life. And then I further say that this man is nowhere visible at present in his integrity or unity, but is seen only in a divided form, here a portion of him in the man of business, or the man who seeks to attain a complete emancipation from nature and society; and there a portion of him in the man of pleasure, the man who seeks to reap the highest satisfactions which nature and society are yet empowered to yield him. The mere man of business presents a very harsh and unhandsome aspect to his fellows, because the wholly chaotic or unorganized nature of our public and private interests, throws him in fact exclusively upon the obedience of the intellect, and renders him a mere slave to prudence. So

also the man of pleasure presents an equally vicious and often disgusting picture, because the same social disabilities throw him upon the obedience of his passions merely, and render him the puppet of every casual impulse.

But with all this infirmity upon them, and I am sure no one has a more lively sensibility to it than I have, these men do yet carry the world forward, for as I said before they stand in an attitude of command towards nature and society, and seem to expect the obedience of these powers. They do in some sort represent the true humanity, represent the lordly position with respect to these powers of the true man when he comes, and hence we cannot but respect them, and ratify in some degree the popular superstition which regards success as the test of merit.

Now, as I conceive, the coming church, the coming divine life, will find its readiest acceptance with this order of men, and will reconcile their present antagonism by destroying the excess which pertains to either when viewed by himself alone. For the church of the future, as I understand the scriptures and the tendencies of history, is a church which shall bring down God's life to earth, and fill the present scene with the tokens of the divine power. It is destined to introduce a universal righteousness, to turn the entire earth into a temple of Deity. But how shall it do this

unless science give it resources for conquering the natural mind, which the old church did not possess? What prevented the old or ritual church from being a final one? Why is ritual Christianity infallibly bound to be swallowed up of spiritual Christianity?

It is because the old church, or ritual Christianity is destitute of any scientific basis, because it derives no support from the nature of man so to speak, but only from convention or authority. The dogmas of the church have no power beyond the confines of the church itself, because they proceed upon a denial of the natural life, the natural sentiments, and therefore provoke the hostility of the natural mind. It is the amply justified conclusion from all the missionary labor of the world that you cannot spread dogmatic or literal christianity among heathen nations, because it is always found to violate their sentiment of justice, or their ideas of right and wrong. The missionaries, when they speak of an innocent man's death being accepted by God in full satisfaction of the penalty due to the sins of the world, always provoke the contempt of the heathen. They think the Christian's God not so good as their own deities who invariably treat the innocent as innocent, and the guilty as guilty. Red Jacket, who figured extensively on the frontiers of this State during the last war with Great Britain, and who was a man of

great natural shrewdness, delighted to attack the missionaries and prove to them the superiority of the Tuscarora theology. And I remember to have heard, that when once he was called to defend one of his tribe by the name of Tommy Jemmy, whose reputation was as ragged as his name, from a charge of murder, tried by the late Judge Spencer, he exercised the Judge's logical acumen amazingly by pushing home the inconsistency of his conduct with his creed, in condemning this poor criminal to the gallows, and yet worshipping a Deity whose chief revelation of himself lay in making the innocent suffer, and letting the guilty go scot free.

But some one may say why did not the learned Justice blunt this tomahawk criticism, by at once alleging that this view of the Christian atonement was not universal among Christians, that it in fact was only one of the numerous philosophies of the gospel, without being the exact gospel itself, which exact gospel was that Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and risen again from death, was God's true Christ or prophet. Surely, says the inquirer, a reply like this, while it would have strictly accorded with the truth, would also have effectually met Red Jacket's charge.

Undoubtedly it would. I think such a reply would have effectually silenced Red Jacket's criticism. But would it at all have weakened Red Jacket's objections to Christianity considered as an

absolute religion? Assuredly not, because Red Jacket, and by Red Jacket I mean the unprejudiced natural understanding everywhere, infallibly seeks a theory of the gospel, infallibly asks why this same Jesus is alone to be regarded as God's true prophet? I say the understanding infallibly asks this, because it *is* the understanding, and conversant with the reason of things, or the ratio which one thing bears to another. When therefore you allege a certain exclusive relation between Jesus and the universal Father—a relation which does not represent, but excludes universal man—the understanding at once seeks to penetrate the law, or ratio, of the relation, and if it be balked, it unhesitatingly pronounces the allegation irrational, that is incredible. If you allege the orthodox theory of the relation, it explodes that instantly as we have seen, on the ground of its immorality: if you allege the Unitarian theory, it explodes that just as rapidly, by shewing that this theory vacates the prime feature of singularity which characterizes the scriptural account of Christ's relation to Deity, and therefore refutes itself. And if finally you allege a purely arbitrary arrangement or appointment on the part of God, it at once ceases to hear you, because the understanding identifies God with the highest reason, or rationality, and denies him all arbitrary or capricious action.

You cannot satisfy the want of the natural un-

derstanding, because you cannot shew any reason in the nature of things why one person, why one man, should have a nearer relation to Deity than any other man, especially why he should have a nearer relation than all other men put together. If the Deity be a universal or infinite power, the understanding is completely destroyed by the attempt to finite him, or to present him in fixed or exclusive relation with one form of existence. If the Deity be a universal or infinite life, the understanding inexorably demands that He be equally near to every form of existence, and be at the same time utterly uncompromised by any. Hence the church cannot satisfy the natural mind, the natural understanding, until it gives over the personal glorification of Jesus Christ, and devotes itself only to his spiritual glorification, or what is the same thing, to the worship of that humanitary spirit which indeed dwelt in him most richly, but which being impersonal, refuses to be identified with any person whatever.

This was the science which the old church lacked, the science of human unity. And it was this lack which has made it impotent to the conquest of the human mind. When pressed with the difficulty of conceiving an exclusive relation between the infinite creator and a finite person, it could not say that this relation was merely symbolic or representative, because science had not yet empowered

it to discern that humanitary substance of which such a symbol could be predicated. Science had not yet affirmed the distinctive genius of humanity, had not recognized its essential supremacy to nature. Hence the old church instead of looking upon the gospel as designed to glorify that distinctively human and highest aspect of our life which Christ represented, and to which he held its natural and social interests in rigid abeyance, regards it as a mere tribute to the personal worth of Jesus, as a mere argument of his private consequence.

The church of the future, the spiritual church, possesses this science, the science of human unity, the science of man, and consequently it will no longer affront and revolt the human understanding. For science has at last brilliantly solved the problem of human destiny, and demonstrated in a thousand superb and palpable forms the truth of immemorial prophecies, that that destiny involves the complete subjugation of nature. In other words science has made this generalization, that humanity is an active force, is a living power, and hence disclaims any merely passive or finite characteristics. Accurate observations of man shew us that the merely physical or natural attributes of humanity, and also its merely moral attributes, do not include man, do not exhaust him. It is seen that there is a force in him superior to his natural

force, and superior to his moral force, which exhibits itself in controlling these lower forces, or making them completely subservient to itself. And inasmuch as science discovers this force only in man, as it perceives no traces of it in the mineral, vegetable or animal forms of existence, it makes no hesitation in declaring it to be exclusively human, or proclaiming it as the distinctive mark of humanity. Science names this force selfhood, proprium, individuality, genius, inspiration, or what not, so long as it is seen to constitute the peculium of man, to constitute his true subjectivity, and so ally him with God or the infinite.

The private or personal life of man is passive, consisting in his physical and moral relations, in his sympathies with outlying nature and his fellow-man. This is the field of the finite consciousness, and the sphere of our finite enjoyment, the sphere of our happiness. When all my relations to nature and my fellow-man are harmonic, then I am happy. No bird of the air, no beast of the field, no flower of the garden, is so brimful of enjoyment as I am then, because none of these are capable of such varied relations as I am, nor consequently capable of such varied happiness.

But happiness is not my chief want, is by no means my profoundest thirst. Much as I prize happiness, I prize righteousness infinitely more. Much as I prize harmonic relations with the finite,

or with nature and society, I prize much more harmonic relations with Deity or the infinite. I may experience very agreeable relations with nature and society, so that my cup shall overflow with happiness, but wo be unto me if this be all my possession. For what shall hinder the dismalest foreboding of reverse, even under the happiest outward conditions? My relations with nature and my fellow-man are intrinsically fickle, variable, perishable, and just in proportion therefore as I prize their exquisite sweetness, am I liable to be invaded by this horrid dread of change. What I want is, to be above these apprehensions, to feel secure of this Paradise, to feel my right in short to *unlimited* enjoyment. In one word, in order to make even my happiness secure or perfect, I want righteousness, or such an inward repose, such a complete mastery of the entire field of the inward and infinite, as shall lift me above all fear of casualty, or change, as shall make all change in fact simply and surely propitious.

How then shall I attain to this inward repose, to this conscious harmony with the infinite, to this irrefragable righteousness? By the diligent cultivation of my natural and social affections? Assuredly not. My righteousness comes in no such way. For it is simply my *interest* to cultivate the most agreeable relations with nature. And it is simply my *duty* to cultivate the most

agreeable or harmonic relations with my fellow-man. I should be a fool if I did not do what my interest dictates. I should be a knave if I did not do what my duty prompts. And does man's righteousness consist simply in not being a fool, in not being a knave? Have I no ideal beyond my vindication from folly and knavery? Has the infinite God no higher righteousness, no more positive glory, to bestow upon me than this, that I always act as interest and duty bind me to act? What a shabby conception of the divine power, of the divine righteousness, do I exhibit when I conceive of it as consisting in the making me morally righteous merely, or righteous only through the denial of evil!

O no! God is infinitely greater than this. I am really ashamed to plume myself upon a successful obedience either to interest or duty. I am really ashamed to feel my aspirations satisfied in doing what it would be sheerly idiotic and discreditable for me not to do. I am ashamed to think of God as incapable of doing any thing more for me, than to keep me from stealing, from committing adultery, and murder. If such be the case, if the end of my creation be the manifestation of the divine glory in the perpetual opprobrium of my nature, then I am sorry that I ever was created, sorry that I should ever know the divine glory to have so shallow a basis, as to con-

sist simply in overcoming its own creature. But the whole idea is abhorrent. It is the mere mud of sensuality. There is no foundation for it in the nature of God or man. I loathe, as I said before, that justification of myself which stands in my moral purity, in my purity from indecency and villany and which consequently leaves my less fortunate fellow-man out. This is an entirely outside and derivative purity, which no way satisfies the cravings of my inner man, which no way appeases the really *infinite* hunger of my spirit. I want an inward purity, a purity which stands in no relations of difference I am under to man or the finite, but in those of unity I am under to God, or the infinite. I want a positive or infinite righteousness, one which shall utterly exhaust the antithesis or antagonism between me and others, and give me instead the broadest unity with all forms of existence. I want no personal righteousness, no righteousness which stands in my difference to the publican and sinner, but one which shall utterly obliterate by its overpowering splendor all those petty differences among men, and recreate them afresh in the lineaments of its own absorbing unity. In short I want the righteousness of God himself, not the filthy righteousness which flows from the fulfilment of any law whatever, physical or moral, but the perfect righteousness which springs from the faith of the Divine Humanity, or

the absolute unity of the divine and human natures.

Now this righteousness, this justification comes about in no mystical way. It is in the intensest degree a rational process. That is to say, it comes about only in the way of believing truth. It is a justification by faith exclusively, and not by any sensuous or mechanical process. It is simply a belief of the truth concerning the divine Humanity, a humanity so genial and intense as to constitute God henceforth the total life of His creatures, and consequently to rob the creature of all lower and lesser dependence.

But how does the truth come about? How is it brought home to our understandings? By the progress of science. When science is as yet in its infancy, or perhaps still unborn, then as nature apparently dominates man at her pleasure, we necessarily distrust the power above nature. We distrust the gods. As nature afflicts us in ten thousand ways, which our scientific resources are as yet inadequate to remedy, we of necessity look upon the secret powers of nature as inimical to us, and dread nothing so much as to be confronted with the gods. But as science advances in the revelation of human power, as it shews nature to be instead of a tyrant, a myriad-eyed and myriad-armed servant to us, we lay aside this distrust, and look upon her secret forces as charmingly friendly

to us, as intending in fact our consummate benediction. And as this testimony of science becomes ever more explicit—as it finally proves nature to be merely the appanage and shadow of man, to be actually nothing more than the contents and baggage, so to speak, of his senses—we at last grow convinced that a complete harmony or unity exists between the power from which nature springs, and that to which it tends, a complete harmony or unity between God and man. In short we grow convinced of God's *humanity*, become convinced that God is essentially human, that he is essential man, and consequently learn at once to claim him as the very centre of our righteousness, as the very source of our strength.

While we were under the dominion of the carnal or natural understanding, God was our weakness and our destruction. Religion—ritual religion—is the disease of the carnal or uninstructed mind. It is the confession which the immature man makes of his immaturity, of his subjection to nature, of the disproportion which still exists between his essential and his phenomenal selfhood, or between humanity and his own private interests. His instincts or his ideas assert perfection, assert infinitude: but his experience, his senses, report only imperfection, only finiteness or limitation. Having thus no sensible basis or anchorage for these ideas of infinitude, he refers them away from humanity,

away from himself to some being utterly distinct from and antagonistic to himself, whom consequently he acknowledges or worships with every lavish form of pomp, with incense, with pictures, with music, with architecture.

It is only in contrast with this huge and overpowering *natural* Deity, who absorbs in himself all perfection, that we shrivel away into all meanness and unrighteousness. We no doubt cloak our real sentiments towards him, under a profuse outward devotion and sycophancy; but hatred of the intensest sort reigns in our hearts. The carnal, natural, or unscientific mind cannot be any thing else than enmity to God. As long as God purports to be an outside person, having interests antagonistic to mine, creating me only to obey his pleasure, creating me only to be his slave in everything but the name, I must necessarily hate him. It cannot be otherwise. The life of the true God within me burns with incessant hatred towards this monstrous and stifling projection of my own ignorance.

It is science accordingly which establishes the truth of the divine humanity. And it is the belief of this truth alone which gives us righteousness, which delivers us from the damning apprehension we are under of a power superior to us, and at the same time essentially unsympathetic or hostile. While I believe myself the creature of such a power,

while I believe that an inveterate disproportion exists between my essential and phenomenal selfhood, I cannot feel repose of soul. I feel myself always in an enemy's country, and liable at any moment to find my vital supplies cut off. But when I become rationally persuaded that no such disproportion exists, that he whom we have hitherto called God is very and essential man, incapable of designing any but the most humane counsels, anything but the intensest aggrandizement of universal man, I am relieved from this superstitious dread, and at once claim from nature an undeviating allegiance. My righteousness shines forth as the noon-day. I feel justified now at the very centre of my being, not by any miserable and mercenary conformity to outward law, giving me a delusive distinction from other men, but by a simple faith in God's humanity, giving me an infinite horror of being distinguished above the vilest thing that still bears the name of man.

I repeat then that this righteousness—this life—of God in man, involves no *hocus-pocus*, no spiritual jugglery, by which I become possessed of it and you do not. It is the mortal enemy of sectarianism or fanaticism. It utterly derides every sensible token of the divine presence, in affirming His omnipresence. Thus it completely explodes the pretensions of a visible church, or a church which does not embrace entire humanity. It turns

the Pope into a mere fossil, capable only of obstructing the progress which he no longer promotes. And it disqualifies Episcopacy and Presbytery even more effectually. As Jesus represented its coming, it will allow of no outward indication, no saying Lo! it is here, or Lo! it is there. It is utterly indifferent, he said, to prescription, as irresponsible to previous expectation as the lightning which flashes at one moment on the one side of heaven, and the next on the other. We achieve it only in one way, not by making much of our moral differences from other men, but by sinking all regard for such differences, by sinking all private designs upon Deity, and identifying our hopes with humanity, with the great life which bears us upon her bosom, and feeds us with the milk of her unitary and eternal destiny. The source of our joy is not a private truth or persuasion, available to your spiritual Stylites, intent only upon his own impudent aggrandizement: it is a public truth borne in upon us from all the winds of heaven, by all the argosies of science, returning from the exploration of nature full-freighted with her massive contributions to human good. We realize it from the noiseless march of history, from the incessant progress man is making towards the complete subjugation of the earth he inhabits. For every day's enterprise shows us that nature is a storehouse of unlimited benefaction to man. We

find that science makes no advance but in the ceaseless direction of human welfare, in the ceaseless vindication of man's essential dignity: we find that the things which we have all along called evil and noxious, have at bottom a heart of the tenderest love to man, and exist only for the purpose of developing the otherwise inconceivable resources of his divine and omnipotent genius.

LECTURE VI.

THE SCIENTIFIC ACCORD OF

NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

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THE comparative worth of natural and revealed religion has long furnished a theme of contention to theology and philosophy. The natural theologian contends that we know God's character sufficiently by the light of nature, to understand our duties towards Him: and that any additional revelation can only prove confirmatory of this one. The advocate of revealed religion, on the other hand, maintains that nature does not convey a clear intimation of the divine character, nor consequently of our relations to it; and that some additional light therefore is needed to instruct us at once in our duties and destiny. The controversy has hitherto proved barren of any positive results. The result indeed has been a drawn battle, neither party feeling itself beaten in the

encounter, nor yet venturing to claim a conquest of the other's position.

I presume the reason of this impotent conclusion is, that each party secretly feels that he cannot do without the other, that the other in fact maintains a truth which furnishes a necessary complement to his own. Thus the advocate of revealed religion feels, that the idea of God, or a power superior to nature, which all the harmonies of nature testify, is a needful basis for the conception of the Lord, or that union of the divine and the human, which he himself maintains. And the advocate of natural religion on his part secretly feels, that if there be a God as he contends, or a power superior to nature, then we have a strong *a priori* reason for supposing his truest manifestation to take place in man.

Whatever may be the case with these old controvertists, we have no further concern with them to-night, than to take the controversy which they have left unsettled out of their hands, and by applying to it the lights of a more advanced knowledge, ascertain whether it is not capable of a satisfactory reconciliation. Natural religion, it appears to me, is based upon an undeniable fact, that is to say upon a veracious dictate of nature. Revealed religion it appears to me is equally based upon a fact, that is upon a veracious dictate of man's spirit. The fact upon which natural religion proceeds

from which it derives all its validity, is a dictate of our natural experience. The fact upon which revealed religion proceeds, or from which it derives all its validity, is a dictate of our spiritual experience. Let us then inquire 1. whether there be any essential antagonism between these fundamental facts, and if not, 2. how it is that the two doctrines which severally confess their paternity, should yet have found themselves arrayed in such mutually hostile relations.

The dictate of nature, upon which natural religion is founded, is, that there is a being superior to nature, and having control of its issues. The dictate of man's spiritual experience, upon which revealed religion proceeds, is that this being is man. In other words, nature confesses the being of God: while man pronounces the mode of His being exclusively human. Thus there is really no discrepancy between the facts, but rather an agreement, the agreement of more and less, of high and low, of foundation and superstructure. You would not say of two travellers leaving Jersey City in the same train of cars, one of whom intended going to Trenton, the other to Philadelphia, that they travelled in different directions. You would say that their direction was the same, but their destination different, and that the remoter destination involved the nearer. So you would say of the two facts in question, the fact of our natural experience,

and the fact of our spiritual experience, that they both tend the same way, only one goes further than the other, and in so doing really involves the other. Our natural experience, as it were, stops at Trenton, or contents itself with affirming that God is. Our spiritual experience pushes past Trenton onwards to Philadelphia: that is to say, it affirms not merely that God is, but that He is Man.

Such is a fair discrimination of the facts in question. Nature does everywhere confess a power superior to herself, while yet she steadfastly refrains from the attempt to syllable its name, or declare its nature. And the spirit of man throughout all time and space, has really clothed this power with exclusively human qualities, qualities very often it is true of a debased or imperfect human type, yet none the less congruous on that account with the instincts of the undisciplined and savage votary.

Whence then arises the conflict we witness between what is called natural religion, and what is called revealed religion? If nature as we have seen suggest nothing more than the existence of a power superior to herself, and man merely clothe this power with such attributes of humanity as are most familiar to himself, what ground do the facts afford for that excessive mutual jealousy which distinguishes the partisans of the two religions? Clearly none at all. Clearly the cause of our envenomed religious differences is not absolute, is

not intrinsic to the merits of the case, but is to be sought exclusively in the immaturity of science. What is wanted perfectly to reconcile nature and spirit, or natural and revealed religion, is that scientific conception of humanity which is now dawning. To the absence of this conception in other words, is owing all that hideous religious warfare which has hitherto marked human history.

My precise object in this evening's Lecture is to submit this position to your judgment. I design to shew you by a brief retrospect of human history that to the mind of science there is not only no discord, but in truth a plenary accord between nature and spirit, and that hence a perfect religion, or what is the same thing a religion adapted to the scientific intellect, completely reconciles the natural dogma of the divine existence, with the revealed or spiritual dogma of his existence only within human conditions. Such is my purpose broadly stated. But in order to do it justice, we shall be obliged incidentally to discuss the genesis of these related ideas, or ascertain precisely how it is that man's natural experience begets the conception of God, or a power superior to nature, and how his spiritual experience begets the conception of the Lord, or the divine natural humanity.

Of course I cannot adequately treat so large a theme within the limits of a popular lecture. Indeed I must be content barely to hint what I con-

ceive to be the truth upon the subject, leaving its complete evolution to the leisurely operation of your own understandings.

First then, let us inquire how we derive from nature the suggestion of a divine existence, that is to say, the existence of a power superior to itself. And here it is of little consequence whether our inquiry be addressed to the infancy of the race, or the infancy of the individual, because the one is but a miniature of the other, all the phenomena of either period answering to those of the other, as face answers to face in water. How then to the infant intelligence of man, the intelligence unenlightened by science, does nature suggest the idea of supernatural existence or power?

By the phenomenon of motion or change. What suggests to us the idea of a power superior to nature, is so to speak the inconstancy of nature, or the phenomenon of unrest, which we everywhere behold. Watch the advent of darkness upon the mind of a child who has never before seen the day decline, and observe how he will cease from his sports, and creep into your lap, and overwhelm you with questions shewing how fully the grand mystery has dawned upon him. Or observe how, when playing about the floor and all the house is silent, he suddenly hears a noise in the hall, or an upper chamber, he instinctively rushes to you with the inquiry "Whence

comes that noise? What *makes* it?" The sudden change, the contrast of the noise with the previous silence, forces upon his mind the conception of power with irresistible sway. What makes the house before so silent now so noisy? What makes the day before so bright and smiling give place now to the sombre night? These things do not take place of themselves. The house would always have remained silent, if left to itself alone, and the day if left to itself alone would always remain bright and smiling.

Change then, or the perpetual variety of natural phenomena, is what first suggests to the mind the conception of supernatural power. In other words it is the intrinsic finiteness or limitation of natural things, which forces upon us the conception of a power superior to nature. Were nature a monotone, did it proceed without any variety, without the sharp contrast or opposition of light and darkness, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, we should remain utterly destitute of any such conception, because its essential elements would be wanting. For the conception of power is strictly contingent upon the experience of contrast or oppugnancy in nature. Our natural experience must undergo a sudden breach of continuity; then the eager imagination leaps forth to fill up this breach by the conception of power.

The personifying of this power, or the concep-

tion of it as a living will, is a later suggestion, and depends upon a perception of the order or unity which embeds all this natural variety. It has not been sufficiently noticed by philosophers, indeed I am not aware that it has been at all noticed by them, that our conception of creative power is not suggested to us by the perception of cause alone, or effect alone, but *solely by the perception of their indissoluble correlation.* Cause and effect denote logical opposites to us, things which to our understanding are invariably opposed, as day and night, heat and cold, etc.; and whose *opposition* therefore, because it negatives to that understanding *the conception of either as the product of the other*, forces upon it the conception of a power distinct from either as *essential* to the existence of both. Let me make this proposition perfectly plain.

It is a well-known law of our intelligence, that our perception of any thing or any event involves some previous and logically opposite perception. Unless we have had this previous and logically opposite perception we shall not have the present one. Thus our perception of light depends upon our previous perception of darkness; our perception of order upon a previous perception of confusion; our perception of beauty upon a previous perception of deformity. Had we never known darkness, disorder and deformity, we should not have been able to discriminate or appreciate light,

order, and beauty when they came before us. They arise to our perception only in association with something else which defines their true character for us, and gives them a place in our acquaintance. We now see them to be genuine *phenomena* or manifestations. They are not ultimate facts to our perception, but mediate. They refer our vision to something beyond themselves. They have no necessary existence to our intelligence. They exist exclusively by virtue of some previous thing permitting them to exist. It is only in contrast or opposition to these other things that they appear to us. Their existence is purely relative. Hence we term them phenomena, manifestations, products, to express the fact of their uniform reference of themselves to something invisible behind them, and to distinguish them from pure being, that is to say, being which is absolute, and does not admit therefore of any previous or opposite conception. The fact that our perception of it invariably depends upon our previous perception of some other and opposite thing, inevitably stamps the thing perceived with a dependent character, as a thing not self-existent, not self-asserted. The uniformity of the law of our perceptions ensures that we shall regard the things perceived as dependent upon something external to themselves. To our perception they have a *beginning:* that is our perception records a time when they were not, when they

had not begun to be. And consequently without any misgiving, by an irresistible instinct in fact, we transfer the testimony of our perceptions to the abstract things themselves, and set them down as genuine *phenomena* or products. Without breaking up and moulding anew the very foundations of our intelligence, we cannot deem them anything else.

This law of our finite knowledge is covered by the term causality, or the relation of cause and effect. We call the first perception in any related phenomena the *cause* of the second: and the second perception the *effect* of the first. Or we may vary the phraseology and call the first element the *antecedent*, and the second the *sequent*. The terms have a strictly equivalent force. *Cause* and *antecedent* express the state in which the second perception begins; *effect* and *sequent* express the state in which the first perception ends. The opposing terms express a relation between two given phenomena—a relation so inseparable to our perception from their very nature, that we cannot conceive of either of them apart from it. Thus we call fire the *cause* of combustion, and combustion the *effect* of fire. There is to our perception such a fixed relation between fire and combustion, that we cannot acknowledge the one without an implied acknowledgment of the other. The combustion which we see must have its beginning in

fire. The fire which we see must have its ending in combustion. Otherwise fire is no longer fire, nor combustion any longer combustion. I do not know the etymological import of the word *cause.* But its obvious force in common use is that of beginning; while that of its correlative effect is that of ending. The one indicates the beginning of our perception of any given phenomenon: the other the end. The terms express no substantive reality, but describe merely relative or phenomenal existence.

Such is the difference which exists to our perception between pure and merely phenomenal being: and it is the chasm between the two which we seek to fill up by the conception of *power* as producing the latter. When we have got the existence of the phenomenon ascertained, when we are sure that it does not exist by itself, but is only a manifestation of something else, we instinctively ask, what is it a phenomenon of? What is this *manifestation*, a manifestation of? Certainly not of the thing out of which we have seen it grow, or by means of which it stands revealed to our perceptions; for by the very necessity of the case it is the direct opposite of that thing. The thing by means of which the phenomenon arises to our perception, is directly negative of the phenomenon. What the latter affirms, the former denies. The one says light, the other darkness: one says heat,

the other cold: one order, the other confusion: one parent, the other child. Consequently the phenomenon at once suggests to us the idea of power, as essential to have overcome the opposition offered to its production by that precedent thing, or state, out of which we have seen it grow.

Thus the term Power expresses our conception of the connection between opposing phenomena. It takes power to bind these opposites together. We see opposite phenomena existing to our perception only by one another's opposition, and we yearn to find the explanation of this tie. The phenomena explain each other very well. That is to say, each pronounces the other the exact opposite of itself. But they do not explain the origin of this identical fact of their opposition. In themselves they are in direct hostility, reciprocally negative of each other. Having by their inseparable alliance to our perceptions both affirmed that they are mere phenomena or products, they now by their unchangeable opposition affirm that neither is the product of the other, nor of itself.

It is the perpetual bipolarity then of nature, the perpetual balance of good and evil, pleasure and pain, light and darkness, which the visible universe exhibits, that forces upon us the conception of power distinct from these opposing phenomena themselves, and essential to their production. The inference is inevitable. We cannot witness this

perfectly balanced antagonism of nature, without the conception of power enforcing it. And power manifesting itself in the production of opposing phenomena, supposes the control of an intelligent will, which constitutes our idea of personality.

Accordingly the infant mind, whether of the race or the individual, is prone to superstition, and explains every novel experience, especially every signally favorable or calamitous occurrence, by the direct intervention of a living will. Thus we find the earliest intellect of the race deluged and actually submerged by the idea of personal Deity. The light and the darkness, the heat and the cold, the storm and the calm, disease and health, abundance and blight, every thing whatever within the range of human observation, betokens the action of some dread person lying behind nature, and playing upon her what pleasant or what doleful tunes he will. The earth is now the visible abode of the gods. Every hill and grove has its altar, every fountain and tree, every river and every mountain boasts a resident divinity. There are gods of the nation and gods of the family, gods of the sea, gods of the land, and gods of the air, gods greater and gods lesser, male and female, of all forms of power, and of every degree of wilfulness. In fact there is but one power in earth or heaven, the power of the unknown and mys-

terious Godhead, who sports with human destiny, and gives no account of his doings.

In this state of things the human intellect lies torpid, and would indeed utterly perish under the shade of its own religious efflorescence, were it not for the timely inoculation of science. Where personal despotism, or mere arbitrary will, is the sole answer to every inquiry, the intellect whose office it is to grow by the investigation of nature, becomes superseded, becomes drugged and divorced from its functions, and consequently dies out. The best living type of this intellect—the purely religious intellect—is the Mahommedan, whose religion is simply naturalistic or material, as is symbolized by its reprobation of wine. The will of God! Such is the patent answer to every question with the Mahommedan. "The will of God" explains the most contradictory things, and solves or at least puts asleep the most knotty problems. Hence life is stagnant everywhere but in Christendom, and the human intellect, instead of proving a menstruum for the refining of this lawless and terrible Deity into the lineaments of a beautiful and benignant humanity, becomes palsied by its own spectral offspring, sinks an actual prey to the unclean and grisly phantoms its own indolence has begotten. The undeveloped intellect, universally, leaves God swamped in nature, conceives him only as the cause of natural phenomena, or practically

denies him any being apart from the superintendence of nature's processes.

We have now accomplished one part of our task. That is to say, we have seen how the conception of a power superior to nature becomes suggested by our natural experience. What remains for us is to observe how in the advancement of our spiritual life this power becomes pronounced purely human. But it will be strictly apposite to this inquiry if we set out by asking why we do not from the beginning name this power *man*, or why we call it God, and separate it by the utmost possible remove from any identification with our inmost being. Nothing we know could be more completely adverse to the religious mind in its beginnings than such a step. And yet if the step have the amplest basis in truth, what prevents it being at once taken?

It is simply man's scientific inexperience, his inexperience of nature's perfect subjection to him. The reason why he does not recognize the perfect *humanity* of the power which nature obeys, is because he himself is still subject to nature. He does not name this power *man*, he dares not identify it with his own essential life, because in so far as man is yet exhibited in nature, he is completely dominated by it. Her sun burns him, her winters freeze him, her floods drown him, her pestilence robs him of strength. He has to snatch his daily

food from her by artifice, by actually circumventing the bird of the air, the fish of the sea, and the beast of the forest. His life is a complete warfare with nature. How therefore can he imagine himself her Lord, or suppose for a moment that any thing but the sharpest possible hostility exists between himself and the power she reveals?

Thus we perceive that it is man's natural impotence, his infirm beginnings in nature, which lead him to separate between God and humanity. He cannot suppose the life which animates him, to be the same with that which controls the course of nature, because the course of nature does not yield him the fruit of his desires. His conquest of nature, his reduction of her to the uses of his life, is not only unachieved, it is in truth scarcely begun. And while this remains the case, he of course can never imagine any identity between the life she really serves, and that which she apparently refuses to serve.

But how is it that man ever gets deliverance from this mental darkness? How is that being so imperfect and impotent by nature, he ever learns to conceive of the divine *humanity*, or, what is the same thing, to identify God, the power above nature, with Man, with his own inmost and indestructible being?

This instruction comes from his spiritual culture or his experience of a selfhood interior and supe-

rior to his natural one, which experience is inevitably conditioned upon the uncongenial relations I have described, as existing between him and the forces of nature. He wants food and clothing; he is sick, he is weary, he is exposed to imminent dangers on every hand, and yet he is ignorant of every method of help, both because society which is the great instrument of human progress, is still undeveloped, and because he is not born like the animals into the science of his life. No animal so base but shows a sunnier front than his, and their placid pasturage sheds contempt upon his turbulent existence. In this state of things—exposed to innumerable hardships, and ignorant of the advantages which flow from organized society or fellowship—he has no resource open to him but to lift his sublime cry of despair to heaven, and cast upon the power enthroned above nature, the responsibility of his deliverance from her toils.

Such is the germination of man's spiritual experience, such the inevitable outbirth of his religious life. *Religion is his inevitable refuge against the oppression of nature.* It is his deathless protest against the inadequate recognition, which his instincts of infinitude receive at her hands. He has in his soul the instinct and prophecy of an unlimited dominion, yet his *debût* in nature stamps him more helpless than any worm of the dust. He does not suspect the truth, but the truth is, that

the slender patronage he enjoys from nature is full of compliment and friendship to him. It is because nature means to obey him with perfect obedience, that she is backward to offer supererogatory service. Like a well-bred servant she waits the expression of her master's will, before putting herself into the attitude of obeying it. Thus her apparent stinginess is full at bottom of a genuine friendship. She merely veils her accessory splendors for a while, in order that he may recognize a higher alliance than hers, in order that he may discern a parentage of which she herself is all unworthy, and which none of her tribes may ever aspire to know. For if man had been born on a level with nature, if he had been like the animal a creature chiefly of instinct, and therefore born into the complete knowledge and complete satisfaction of all his wants, then of course his beginning would have been as perfect as his ending, and he would have had no history, no spiritual evolution. In that case all those ideas of God and immortality, of goodness and truth, of beauty and fitness, which support the superstructure of his present science, and have always supplied the *momentum* of his action, would have been inoperative, and he would have remained forever destitute of spiritual consciousness. He would have gratefully received every boon at nature's hands without dictation or complaint, and having every instinct satisfied like

all the other animals, he would also like them have grovelled all his days, nor ever conceived, much less consummated, that truly human epic, the subjugation of death and hell.

The development of the religious instinct, then, constitutes the first step in man's affirmation of the divine Humanity. Nature so oppresses him, affords him so little satisfaction, that he instinctively seeks help from the power above her, and in so doing assumes by implication that this power is more friendly to himself than to her, feels a livelier sympathy with humanity than with mere nature. This is an immense step, that famous first step which involves all the rest. For in fairly giving way to the religious instinct, or in admitting the sentiment that God cares more for me than for my nature, more for my inmost and deathless soul than for my outmost and perishing body, I do in effect though dimly avouch the humanity of God. At the very least I have put humanity between him and nature.

I said just now that the religious sentiment in man was equivalent to the sentiment that God cared more for him than for nature, more for his inmost and individual soul, than for his natural and perishing body. And this is true. Religion is never vague, save where it has degenerated into mere sentimentality. It is to the last degree practical, and full of definite purpose. What a man seeks by it is always the conquest of nature. It is

the child of struggle and tears. It is born of suffering. As I have said before, it would never have had development in man, if nature had perfectly satisfied his wants. It is only because he feels wants which nature does not and cannot satisfy, that he boldly appeals to the master to compel his niggardly servant into obedience. He does not go to God, or the power above nature, for the purpose of making graceful genuflexions, or confessing himself a miserable sinner in exquisitely modulated rhetoric. This is the function of the *pseudo*-religionist who comes upon the stage only after the real one has departed, when as now religion is no longer a life but a lesson, when it has become a social institution, an authorized and luxurious profession, having its competitive altars, priesthoods, creeds, formularies, and so forth.

O no! religion is a very different business from this, at least in its beginnings. Then it is a necessity, not a tradition. Then it is a life, not a luxury. Then it is a thing for use, not for possession. Then one is no more conscious of it, than he is conscious of the skin on his body, or the blood in his veins. For then it is not a social institution, nor consequently does it confer any social distinction. It is only the artless honest outcry of the human soul against the oppression of nature. Every instinct of the soul denounces this oppression. Every instinct of the soul affirms the intrinsic servility of

nature. Why? Because the soul has a higher origin than nature: because it claims an inherent divinity which nature does not recognize. Therefore it is that the soul cannot submit to nature's penury. Therefore it is that she cannot be reconciled except with a perfectly orderly condition of nature, a condition which shall clearly legitimate her uttermost liberty. In short it is only because God is in truth essential Man, and dwells therefore in every soul of man as in His sole tabernacle: only because a really *infinite* power vivifies man, and constitutes his vital selfhood: that his earliest voice is the voice of prayer, and his earliest effort a commencement of the subjugation of nature.

I look upon the dawn of man's religious life then, or the commitment of his personal interests to the power above nature, as the very initiament of his great destiny, which is the realization of the unity of the divine and human natures. His spiritual consciousness has now begun, his consciousness of a life or destiny different from and superior to that of his body. This experience can never be unlearned. It can only go on to grow until it finally culminates in the scientific verity of the Divine Humanity.

Let us now briefly recount our steps. First of all we saw that the conception of the divine existence or power is suggested to us by the variety or opposition of natural phenomena. Then we saw

that man is prevented identifying this power with essential Man, when he first becomes acquainted with it, by the circumstance that the phenomenal man, (or he himself and all the men he knows) is still subject to nature, and therefore exactly opposite or antagonistic to the power she obeys. And then finally we saw that the development of his spiritual or religious life consequent upon this experience of nature's oppression, constitutes the real germ and pledge of his final acknowledgment of the divine humanity, or of the essential unity of God and man.

And now our final step must be, to trace the gradual expansion of this germ into its fullest scientific expression. I cannot do this adequately I repeat, within the limits of a lecture, nor indeed a volume, because that task would involve a close detail of the progress of society, or a definite picture of the process by which the scientific truth of human unity becomes established, and serves as a basis for the idea of the spiritual unity of God.

However, let us do the best our limits allow. Let us by closely following the developments of the religious instinct in history, seek to shew how we gain an ever advancing scientific perception of the subserviency of nature to human use, and hence become able to avouch the essential humanity of the power from which it proceeds, or by which it is animated.

You all know that it is a habit of the infantile understanding,—the understanding which being unillumined by science, is still controlled by the senses, or by mere appearances—to finite the divine existence, or assign it strictly corporeal limitations. The mind to which science has not yet revealed the perfect unity of nature, finds it hard to conceive of an infinite or unitary being, a being which manifests itself under every form of visible existence, and is therefore confined or limited to none. Hence when it first begins to recognize a supernatural existence, or a power above nature, it distributes it among various finite forms or personalities, according to the various phases of its manifestation. It asserts polytheism or a multitude of gods, one having dominion over this aspect of nature, another over that, one producing one phenomenon and another producing another, till the earth becomes a complete Pantheon, every part appropriated to the gods, and bristling against human usurpation.

This is the earliest condition of the human intellect. It marks the very initiament of human culture, when the mind is still dominated by the senses, and before science has begun to develope the subserviency of nature to man. Art is as yet unknown save in its rudest beginnings. The instruments of tillage have not been invented. Houses or even garments to protect one from the

inclemency of the skies, are still unconceived. Huge forests cover the earth peopled with savage animals inimical to human life, and great floods separate contiguous lands, forbidding the friendship of man with man. Undrained plains breathe forth miasmata which lay the strongest in the dust. The wind howls upon the shore, the thunder roars along the air, the lightning leaps from tree to tree, like a frenzied demon, the rain descends with pitiless glee, and man, the unconscious master of all this lavish power, stands the while its helpless sport, its cowering victim.

But this condition is transient. Man does not call upon God in vain, for God answers him richly. How? By a genius equal to every emergency. For with man's experience of nature's stubbornness, is born also his own invention. This is the only answer it befits God's goodness to yield, the only answer it befits man's destiny to receive. For suppose that when man asked help of God in his calamity God answered him literally, that is by simply changing his circumstances; instead of spiritually, that is by giving him wit to overcome his circumstances, or subdue them to his will: why then in that case God would be shown to be mere weak passion, mere indulgent affection, and man himself would have turned out a huge slavering idiot, the height of whose wisdom would be to cry, and the consummation of his felicity to eat ginger-

bread, or rather peaches; for gingerbread is a product of human genius, and supposes a pretty advanced subjugation of nature to human use, marks a comparatively elevated stage of culture in the race. In that case man instead of being the glory of God, would have proved His reproach. For so defective and mendicant a creature could not fail, of course, to imply an extremely pinched and penurious source. Instead of God's enjoying a rest or sabbath in him, He would have found him a perpetual worry and toil, demanding an incessant watchfulness, and an endless alternation of march and countermarch, or of hold-fast and let-go. In short man would have remained a mere unbaked cake, fitted no doubt, as the children say, for any amount of "patting and patting, and rolling and rolling, and pricking and pricking," but totally incapable of receiving any permanent impress of divinity.

I know very well that this is the ecclesiastical conception of God's creature. The sects all represent man as a mendicant. They represent his normal relation to his maker, as that of a beggar to his patron. They represent God as keeping his creature at starvation point, in order that he may make sure of his daily homage and recognition. But I presume no one in this audience needs expostulation on that head, and I will therefore resume the thread of my argument by repeating,

that inasmuch as the true image of God in humanity, implies the lordship of man over nature, so when man appeals to God for aid against nature, God answers him only by giving him a genius able to subdue nature. God is blessedly deaf to all unmanly suffering, to all such suffering as crouches in the chimney corner, and will not take arms against nature's invasion. Nature itself provides potent opiates for this affliction, in the sympathy of partial affection, or if need be in the stillness of the grave. But God aids the manly only. As the truthful old Swedenborg phrases it, God regards only eternal ends in man, and consequently puts him beyond the reach of nature's oppression, not by deadening his sensibilities, but by empowering or intensifying his will, his manliness, his self-respect, and so compelling nature's subjection.

Thus, as I said before, with man's experience of nature's stubbornness, is born also his own invention. Feeble and unlearned as he is by nature, he soon contrives certain weapons and shields, before which nature's niggardliness and inclemency are compelled to bow. He invents clothes, he invents houses, he invents bows and arrows and weapons of the chase, he secures the services of fire and water and wind, and he finally invents the instruments of husbandry, and learns the art of compelling nature to bring forth at his will.

All this is wonderful. This makes the glory of man, that he being by nature more helpless than any worm of the dust, yet vindicates his essential supremacy by compelling nature ere long into his abject vassalage. I am amazed at myself that I should ever be blind to the excellence of man, that I should ever offer dishonor at the shrine of so august a presence as he reveals. When we think of what man has done for man, what he has done and what he shall yet do, so to speak, for Deity, in making this earth an abode worthy of his presence, how can we honor him enough, or enough deplore the foul and libellous abuse of him, by which we once vainly thought to purchase His maker's good-will. Look at man as he is by nature, a mute imploring savage, ignorant of all arts; and look at him now as he is by culture, or by God's indwelling power, standing upon a regenerate earth covered with the trophies of his own genius. When we look at the early earth, covered with a vegetation and animation so profuse and rank, as apparently to crowd out all possibility of human life, and now look upon it cleared of its morasses, stripped of its jungle, its wild and useless beasts extirpated, or else tamed to the service of man, its bosom broken up all over to the rays of the sun, and made a seminary of every sweet odor, of every graceful and varied shrub, of every succulent grass, of

every juicy and delicious fruit: when we see it traversed with a net-work of roads, and its elemental airs, and fire and water harnessed to the service of human industry, and heaven's lightning itself brought down to be a domestic drudge: when above all we see it covered with villages and towns and cities, in which every throb of every heart is felt in every house, and the intercourse of affection and intelligence lifts the soul into unexampled heights of bliss, and every art lends its cunningest enchantments, and luxury beggars even the imagination to transcend its performances: when, I say, we look at that early picture of squalid poverty, of savage imbecility, and then at this later picture of growing refinement, of boundless power, of inexhaustible beauty, and ask how the change came about, the ready and accordant answer is, "Solely through the genius of man." His is the magic power which has made the earth into a paradise, into a realm fit for the inhabitation of God. O that the day were fully ripe for the inauguration of that true and *living* religion, which in the words of the Christ, will make the perfect love of God coincident with the perfect love of man. But this is a digression.

Now the gradual rise of man above nature which I have briefly sketched, this gradual emancipation which he wins from her thraldom, becomes rapid exactly as human society becomes organized. Society, the fellowship of his kind, is the grand

instrumentality by which man's supernatural force and destiny become demonstrated. Of course it is only society as spiritually or scientifically organized, which brings about the highest or divinest results; but a thing must first be natural, must first get a basis in nature, before it can justify its spiritual promise. Society accordingly, even in its most natural or least scientific form, is full of advantage to man. The immense industrial activity engendered by it, the division of employment rendered possible, together with the sense of security to property, so far lifts him above the cares of the passing day, as to allow him mental expansion, and ensure a continuous progress of thought.

The most decisive result and evidence of mental progress in man, is seen in his approaches towards monotheism, or the conception of a unitary power in nature. To be sure society, being as yet very imperfect, prevents this conception being at all adequate to the reality. But still it perpetually fosters and enlarges the conception, by becoming itself enlarged. Thus even in its crudest or most limited beginnings, society attests a certain unity in man, and so far forth attests a unity in God. It is not a universal unity of course which is attributed to Him, but at least a unity coextensive with that of society. Suppose the social unity to embrace that of the family only, then to the extent of that tie, one God is acknowledged. The deity

instead of being as hitherto a vague demonic power, busy only with nature, is becoming humanized by individual and family appropriation, by the attribution of personal sympathies to him, and benignant designs towards certain leading men. He becomes the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and takes a peculiar interest in the minutest concerns of their history, until the original family swells into powerful tribes, and finally into a great nation. Then he is the God of the nation, and cherishes designs for their advancement above all the nations of the earth.

Hence you perceive that the meagreness or limitation of human society, forbids as yet any very spiritual recognition of the divine unity. The fact that man's sympathies are still shut up by his social forms, to the members of his own family, his own tribe, or at most his own nation, forbids him to assign any greater unity than this to God, forbids him to discern in the power above nature any widely human traits, any sympathy with man as man, but only as Egyptian, Jew, or Roman. No doubt it becomes early though dimly suspected by the intellect of man, that the opposite phenomena of nature, light and darkness, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, do equally promote his welfare by equally developing the resources of his genius; and hence that they both alike attest the divine regard for him. But this generalization is devoid

of all spirituality—is robbed of all scientific value—by reason of the subject's limited unity with his kind. For he is not yet purely, and above all things, man: he is simply Jewish-man, Egyptian-man, or Roman-man. Hence his generalization in regard to the divine benignity, and consequently in regard to the divine unity, halts. It leaves God a merely Jewish, Egyptian, or Roman heart, instead of a broadly human one. Nature truly enough reflects the divine regard for man, but as man is not yet one, as he is divided or partial, so of course the divine regard is divided, is partial, is different to some men from what it is to others. In short some nations boast of a more powerful divinity, and some a feebler.

The development of monotheism occupies the whole initial chapter of human history. Its formal or literal assertion finally culminated in Judaism, though its spiritual apprehension appears to have been still more remote from that nation than any known in history. The Jew certainly had no excuse for his blindness. From being one of the most potent nations in history, he had become one of the most impotent. From being one of the haughtiest, he had become one of the most debased. And all this in spite of prophecies and promises of the divine favor, which make his annals burn, and which even now lend their glowing eloquence to clothe the scientific hope and expectation of uni-

versal man. Religious pride, the pride of his national distinction before God, seemed actually to have besotted him. Instead of manfully renouncing a pretension which had perpetually betrayed him, and which had finally left him a helpless victim under the iron despotism of Rome, he hugged it the closer as its insanity became more conspicuous: so that at present even, while his place and nation have long been taken away, and no foothold has been afforded him on the earth for twenty centuries, the voice of prayer still goes up from hallowed lips, and Jehovah is daily besought in every land still to remember Zion, and make her His promised praise in all the earth.

But however it may have fared, and may still fare, with the Jew spiritually, his national identification with the principle of monotheism, ensures him an historic importance above all Greek or Roman fame. It made him the pivotal nation in history, the actual pivot upon which the spiritual destinies of humanity turned. Had not this truth got embodiment in their polity, no basis would have been afforded for that peculiar evolution in human affairs, signalized by Christianity. Had Jesus been born in a polytheistic nation, among a people confessing various and discordant deities, the sharp antagonism which he offered to the national hope, the superior sanctity which he claimed to himself by inward derivation, or derivation

from God, over that which was outwardly derived or derived from Abraham, could have found no clear platform, could have got no decisive expression. And consequently the spiritual conception of the divine unity—or what is the same thing, the present scientific conception of the divine humanity—would have been without a germ in the memory of the race. For this conception, according to my understanding, most strictly affiliates itself to that far off Jewish fact, of a young man of humble origin, destitute of material resources, of outward comeliness even, and of those shining personal accomplishments which win the applause of the mob, persistently renouncing the sacredest hopes of his nation towards God, and boldly asserting on this very account so intimate an alliance between God and his own soul, as ensured him the empire of the earth, and entitled him to the homage of the universal human heart.

Let me try to justify this conviction of mine as to the immense importance of Christ's historical position, to your understanding. Remember of course that I do not aim to assert any vapid personal consequence for the Christ, but a purely spiritual consequence, attaching only to the superb humanitary function he performed.

Human history—the history of man in the aggregate—is a portrait in large of the same substantial facts which individual history, the history

of any well-developed man, gives us in miniature. There is nothing in the part which is not in the whole, and if accordingly we wish to achieve a comprehensive view of history, we have only to fix our attention upon an individual example.

Now it is very evident to a calm observation, that the end of individual experience, the aim of private culture, is the development in man of a certain spiritual force or capacity which enables him to assume his own guardianship, and so exempts him from the control of his father and mother. Unlike the animals who are guided by instinct, or are born with all the necessary knowledge and apparatus of their life, man is the subject of education. His true selfhood is not that which meets the eye, and which comes from his father and mother; it is on the contrary completely latent, and depends for its development upon a long discipline and experience of life. The development of this selfhood in some sort or other constitutes his majority, his manhood. The process is of course in most instances, owing to our imperfectly organized fellowship, very poorly accomplished at present. But it is very clear nevertheless, that the aim of all individual culture, is the education or bringing forth from the mere earth of the subject's natural condition, this perfect spiritual flower of manhood, that exact selfpoise, that complete subserviency of his outward

self to his inner or rational self, which gives him the mastery of his own actions, and so makes him a man among men. In short the grand aim of the individual history or growth is spiritual, not material. It is not to make him a handsome man, nor a stout man. It is not to make him the likeness of his father nor his mother, nor the image of anything in heaven above, or the earth beneath, or the air between. It is simply to make him *himself*, to divorce him from mere hereditary biasses and dependences, and put him on the feet of his own original and divine manhood.

As this is the case with the individual destiny, so it is the case accordingly with that of the race. The aim of universal human history is also spiritual not material. The aim is to develope in universal man a certain divine force, which shall give him the lordship both of nature and society, both of his physical and social circumstances. The secret of history from the beginning has been, not to make man healthy, wealthy, and happy, but rather by health and disease, by wealth and poverty, by enjoyment and suffering, to develope in him an infinite genius or ability which shall ensure him the amplest obedience of nature, and turn society into his unlimited servant and friend. The problem of destiny is not to give man the dominion of nature and society, as men mean by

giving, but *to make him worthy of the dominion*, by endowing him first with the consciousness of inherent divinity, and so garlanding his faculties with an infinite beauty and fragrance. The development *of an infinite inward wealth or power* in man—such is the meaning of human history, and the entire apparatus of the outward, the whole life of nature and all our social institutes, are strictly subservient to this grand purpose.

To love and to know—passion and intellect—such is the ordinary programme of human destiny. But this is to leave out the divinest feature of manhood, that of life or power. It is to make man purely passive, or to strip him of activity. Goodness and truth—love and wisdom—are capital things in their way, or as generators of action. But view them apart from this function, and instead of a blessing they become a curse. The love I feel which is denied expression, is only a torment to me. The wisdom I have mastered, unless it go forth into exercise, is no better than folly. What is there adorable even in the divine goodness and wisdom, which is not derived from their power? Thus to make man the mere subject of affection and intellect, of love and wisdom, cannot be the end of history, but rather to give him the complete mastery of these things, such a lordship of them as makes them not ends but means, and reduces them to the exact service of his life or action.

Power and not passion, ability and not knowledge, is the crowning or divine mark of manhood. Both passion and knowledge are excellent subordinates, but poor commandants. Viewed as incentives to man while he is yet unconscious of his essential dignity, or does not recognize the divine inspiration in his own soul, they have played and do still play an admirable part. They have kept him restless and insubmissive to external control, have prevented his tamely succumbing to mere authority, like the beast who fawns upon the hand which feeds and pats it, and have consequently driven authority to assume a more human shape. But for all this they are essential servants of man, neither masters nor guides. They are designed for his ornament and refreshment, not for his inspiration. They are the solace of his hours of repose: the means not the ends of his action. In short they are not the sun of his majestic day; they are only the stars of his sweet and mystic night.

The aim of destiny—the grand end of education—being thus precisely the same in respect both to the individual and the race, we should of course expect to find a great similarity in the process. Now it is perfectly familiar to common experience that the approach of manhood in the individual is always critical. It involves a very marked change, by which the subject from being hitherto a circum-

ference to a very remote centre, becomes himself a centre to new circumferences. This change lies in the faculty of reproduction, and is signalized by an immense enlargement in the sphere both of sympathy and intelligence. The youth is no longer docile to father and mother. He listens to be sure with habitual respect to their wisdom, but he has thoughts now of his own, and he takes counsel only of himself. His life undergoes a change of law. It obeys an inward rather than an outward prompting. A sense of personal dignity is developed, and aspirations after an enlarged sphere of relations. He dies to his childhood, and the law of his childhood. The paternal home which sheltered his infancy, has become too narrow for him. The condition of dependence there so habitual, affronts his present instincts of freedom, or manliness. A great struggle is doubtless involved: these habitual natural relations are so sweet and soothing, that no one would spontaneously violate them, and it is accordingly only by the strength of a supernatural instinct that the step is accomplished. Thus the youth forsakes father and mother, and cleaves only to himself, or the divine and beauteous Eve fashioning in the depths of his own bosom. He goes forth into the world a man, to reap exactly what the quantity of his manhood sows.

Such is an accurate picture also of development

in the race. The race of course has the unity of a man, else would there be something in the part which was not in the whole, in which case the whole would not be a whole. The race is a large or grand exhibition of the same life which you and I and each other person exhibits in miniature. Hence the history of the race, like that of the individual, presents a certain order of progress, presents first an infantile stage, then a puerile or transitional stage, then a mature stage. Philosophers name these various stages differently, but those of them who have attained to this height of vision, concur as to the essential characteristics of each. Swedenborg for example names the first stage that of affection, or a state in which the heart rules, and of which of course the characteristic activity is worship. He names the second stage that of intellect, or a state in which the lungs rule, and of which of course the characteristic activity is skepticism or criticism. He names the third stage scientific, or a state in which the senses rule, and of which the characteristic activity is an investigation of the harmonies of nature. He marks the successive lapse of what he calls the church, meaning thereby THE DIVINE LIFE IN MAN, through all these stages, in order that it may be finally established forever upon the immutable rock of science. And Comte, whose point of view is by no means so elevated or commanding as Sweden-

borg's, yet formulizes the three general periods as successively theological, metaphysical, and positive or scientific, which names cover the same substantial facts.

Now looking at humanity thus, as presenting the unity of a man, we at once perceive that it claims a certain hierarchical distribution. We perceive that certain nations take the lead of all others, and carry history onward by the sheer magnetism of their genius. We perceive that while the whole of history exhibits the grand series I have sketched, every successive and critical portion of it reproduces the series on a small scale: that the genius of one nation for example is devotional like the Jew, of another intellectual like the Greek, of another practical like the Roman: and that history as an integer advances by natural crises involving the decease of these particular nations, and the transfer of power to younger blood.

Now the Christian era marked one of these grand strokes of destiny, one of these grand crises which inaugurate humaner ideas of God, humaner fellowship among men, and humaner arts of life than the world had yet permitted. In the Jew as symbolizing the grand pervading feature of the earliest stage of history, namely, worship, and as identified therefore with the *cardiac* or most central sphere of life, the infantile stage of human development

culminated. Deny the Jewish hope, destroy the Jewish faith, in a Deity who was pledged to exalt them above all the nations, and you forever destroy the idea of God as a respecter of persons. And as you destroy this idea, of course you proportionably inaugurate the idea of God, as sympathizing only with universal man. Such an idea of God or the infinite begets a corresponding change in the whole sphere of the finite, inspires more genial sympathies and an improved society among men, and so stimulates the gentler arts of industry and peace.

What then was the precise attitude of the Jewish mind at this crisis? It was an attitude of ardent hope and expectation towards God, and of extreme contempt, if not extreme malignity, toward the rest of mankind. The nation, in spite of its splendid history, was now prostrate at the feet of Cæsar, and it hailed consequently with preternatural alacrity, every token which augured an approaching divine interference in its behalf. Several adventurers, no doubt honestly fanatical, had arisen to vindicate the national expectation, and the truth of immemorial prophecies, but the Roman legions had quickly extinguished each feeble spark as it rose. But with every disappointment the national hope sprang up more fierce and vigorous, until at length public attention became concentrated upon the marvellous youth of Nazareth.

And now the all-absorbing speculation was—"was this at last the true Christ, the anointed of God to give deliverance to his people."

It is easy for us at this distance of time, to see that the answer to this question depended solely upon the conduct of Jesus. Had he like the false Christs who had preceded him, confirmed the national expectation: had he ratified the Jewish hatred of the Roman, and their contempt of all other people: had he betrayed in short any merely political designs: then clearly we see that he could not have been the Christ, that the spirit of the universal Father must have disclaimed such a son. For the true Christ or anointed of God, being as universal as God, and having no special sympathies, was bound to renounce such sympathies in so far as they should be imposed upon him by his nativity. He could only truly avouch himself the Christ, by exhibiting the spirit of God, a spirit of love to all mankind alike, Jew and Roman, Pharisee and publican, saint and sinner. He was bound to maintain this attitude at all times and under all circumstances. He was bound if need be to suffer every extremity rather than abandon it, to be patiently spit upon by every canting demagogue, to be incessantly vilified by whatsoever was decent and of good report in the nation, to be viewed with shuddering aversion by delicate and tender women, to whose bosoms pity had never before been a

stranger, to be forsaken even by the friends of his earliest days who best knew his stainless innocence, and finally to be nailed like the basest of cut-throats to a hideous cross, until the last drop of his blood had slowly oozed from his veins.

Such was the baptism wherewith the *true* Christ was bound to be baptized. Because, any thing short of this would have justified the Jew, and left human history consequently in the mud of the lowest sensuality and superstition. Either human history was bound to advance, and finally vindicate man's essential divinity; which obligation involved the complete erasure of the Jewish pretension from history: or else it was bound to stand still and finally expire, so proclaiming man's essential diabolism; in which case the Jewish pretension were highly probable. To choose between these alternatives was the business of the Christ. To decide that controversy once and forever was the burden laid upon his shoulders. Of course it could not be laid upon them by an outward imposition, but only by an inward one. His mission grew out of his manly soul. His anointing was consubstantiate with his inmost spirit. There was nothing dramatic about the process. It was a bit of life so intense, that his flesh wept blood, and the whole realm of nature became plastic with sympathy. The heavens veiled their face before a

sorrow so human and majestic, and the mute earth itself sent forth a groan of prostrate adoration.

It was the attitude of the Jew therefore which shaped the function of the Christ. The form of the national hope, was the glass upon which his character mirrored itself. He was not constituted the Christ *ab extra*, but only *ab intra*. No preparatory gymnastics, no invisible legerdemain, gave him a patent-right as it were to the office. He became the Christ by the sheer pith of his manhood, by the naked might of his fidelity to his own convictions, to his own ideal, by offering God an abode worthy of His infinitude, the breast of a true man. He was not constituted the Christ by being less a man than others, but only by being more a man, or by affording humanity for the first time in history, a voice adequate to its immensity. Accordingly nothing can be more mistaken and puerile, than the traditional reverence paid to the memory of Jesus. It proceeds upon the motive of his presumed distance from the ordinary conditions of humanity. It is supposed that he possessed *peculiar* advantages from Deity, enabling him to do the things he did. Unquestionably the divine spirit dwelt in him without limit, nerving his sweet and manly soul to the superb victory he achieved. But this is not the ordinary view. It is commonly conceived that he had help from God considered as an outward person, help which was

given to him and not given to others, and that it was this unseen power which qualified him for his work.

But clearly this hypothesis wounds our reverence. We do not revere a man for merely acting in accordance with his nature, but only for doing what is above the mark of his nature, for bringing out of it a virtue which others have not been able to bring. It is only his spontaneous or supernatural force—that which attaches to his inmost self exclusively, and denies any outward inspiration—which captivates peculiar homage. Only in so far as he acts without either physical or social constraint, without any obligation either of necessity or duty: in other words, only in so far as he acts from himself and not from tuition: does he exhibit his essential divinity, and consequently prefer any title to our infinite regard, or such a regard as is implied in the term reverence. If he act from a sense of duty merely, like a man regenerating, who *out of deference to some higher will*, refrains from doing things which habit has endeared to him, we perceive that his action is not spontaneous, but only voluntary or *quasi*-spontaneous; that it is not done really of himself, but only *as of* himself. We consequently tender no homage but that of sympathy to the subject of regeneration. He would confess himself mocked by any other, because he is manifestly without a throne, feeling

wholly destitute indeed of life *ab intra*, and vehemently imploring it from some foreign source. It is only the glorified or enthroned man, he who acts no longer *as of* himself or dutifully, but really *of himself* or spontaneously, and therefore claims the intimate alliance of Deity, that brings us to our knees in our own despite, and receives the tribute of an infinite admiration. This man is conscious of no difference between God's will and his own, and consequently his entire life is instinct with grace and beauty. God and he are no longer two, but intimately one. If now we consider the Christ to have sustained any *personal* relations to Deity, if we consider him to have obeyed God's will as consciously distinct from his own, to have obeyed it as an influence outside of himself, and capable of coming into conflict with himself provided he did not obey it: then clearly we degrade him from his true divine dignity, and reduce him to the base level of nature. We make him only morally good, or good, not by internal derivation, but from a sense of obligation to others, and so discharge him instantly of all divinity. And if we assert any private relations between him and Deity, any secret collusion by which he was specially qualified and upheld in his great office, we degrade him *below* the level of ordinary humanity. We reduce him to the level of the juggler. For if a man be specially helped *ab extra*—if he go

into the deadly fight with concealed armor, making him really invulnerable to the weapons which destroy his honester fellows, he is not a hero, but a coward. Why do we not revere M. Chabert, the fire-king? Because we know that he is practising upon our ignorance. We know that if we were admitted behind the scenes whence we are now arbitrarily excluded, we also could do whatsoever he does, and quite as well.

We should be ashamed therefore to tender the memory of Jesus, this purely stupid and superstitious admiration, which strips him both of divine and human attributes, and leaves him a mere unintelligible and unhandsome hybrid. What sincere homage can we pay him, so long as we suppose that not he himself, but some other person of whom he was only the agonizing mask, performed the manly things attributed to him? He sinks in that case from regal manhood into the condition of a puppet, and instead of shedding a divine lustre upon our nature, leaves it as dark as he found it. In fact the popular ecclesiastical superstition defrauds Jesus of ordinary veracity, and leaves him exactly what he himself pronounced the Pharisee, a mere actor or hypocrite. For if Jesus recognized the externality of God to his own inmost selfhood, if he obeyed the divine will as the will of another conscious person than himself, if in every thing he said and did he did

not consciously act from his own inmost and central self, without foreign dictation, he was even less of a man than William Tell or Arnold Winkelried. For these men, though the results of their action have been less human or universal, yet acted spontaneously or from themselves, and would have felt degraded by confessing any foreign influence.

But I am digressing. I wanted to show you that our present scientific conception of Deity, and our present scientific expectation towards the future, refer themselves most strictly to the influence of Christ's life on history. And in order to justify this conviction to your understanding, I have shewed you that Jesus belonged to the veritable texture of humanity, that he was part and parcel of its actual warp and woof, or, to use a very convenient French word, that a connection of absolute *solidarity* existed between him and the rest of mankind, making us the legitimate heirs and fellows of his splendor. Because unless this connection existed in the most plenary sense, his influence upon us and his interest to us would legitimately stand at zero.

I claim then most distinctly that it is upon the attitude of Jesus towards the Jewish hope and faith, that the present and future scientific progress of man pivots. God being essential man, of course there is no revelation of Him possible save

through man, at least no revelation which is in the least degree adequate to his spiritual apprehension. But if this be true—if man be the true shekinah—then it is obvious that creation must so shape itself, as continually to exhibit man in his legitimate lustre and integrity, as continually to eliminate from him what is purely natural, common, and adventitious, and so signalize what is strictly human, individual, and essential. For if creation do not shape itself to this end—if in other words its aim be not to discriminate the human or divine element from all lower and temporary elements—then clearly the creator would be left without any witness within the realm of His own creation: which is an absurdity or contradiction without bottom.

Now creation has actually shaped itself according to this obligation from the beginning. View it geologically even, and you see a continual progress from grosser, cruder, and chaotic conditions, into subtler, more orderly, and definite conditions. In the beginning or in the centre you find all things in solution; as you recede from the beginning or centre, you find denser and less dense stratification, until finally when you reach the surface you find the whole brute mass subsiding into the most delicate and fairy organizations, sensitive to every breeze, and blushing under the amorous dalliance of the sun. Or take any of the king-

doms of nature, animal or vegetable, and you will find an incessant rise from lower and grosser to more refined series, an incessant *conatus* towards some grand culminating series, which accordingly bounds or rules the kingdom. However, I have no time or space for the investigation of the law in these lower latitudes. We have to do just now not with the facts of outer physiology, but only with those of inner physiology; not with the developments of nature, but with those of supernatural or human history.

Human history then has shaped itself from the beginning according to the precise programme I have copied. It has shaped itself in such a manner as incessantly to elicit man's inherent pith and substance, by provoking him to throw off all outward dependence, by inciting him to deny all divinity which does not authenticate his own central freedom or sanctity. This historic tendency had got no clearer expression up to the time of Jesus, than what was furnished by national or natural peculiarities. Man had only so far appropriated, or brought home, Deity to him, as to identify Him with his own nation or kindred. He was not related to Deity *per se*, but only through Abraham, or some other traditional head of his tribe. But in thus giving Deity only a national hospitality, in thus shutting Him out of his own private bosom, the worshipper of course left himself only

a political selfhood, only a national sanctity. He had no private immortality, no sanctity which the accident of his birth had not given him, and which therefore the destruction of his nation would not abolish. To the mind of such a man consequently the voluntary abnegation of the national hope, was an abnegation of the divine righteousness.

Hence the clean and exquisite malignity of the Jew to Jesus. For it was precisely this vital prejudice that Jesus aimed to perforate. He declined to ratify the accredited connection with Deity through Abraham, or through any natural medium whatever, and claimed an immediate connection through his own spirit. He denied that God had any political sympathies, affirming that all his designs upon earth were strictly human, importing the blessing of universal man. He did not hesitate accordingly to relegate the most authentic progeny of Abraham, and the lineal successors of Moses, to hell, whenever they gainsaid this humane doctrine, and to promise a special beatitude to every degraded sinner who approved it.

I have no intention to say that Jesus perceived the immense scientific bearing of his own pretension. I only mean to say that in affirming according to the profoundest convictions of his soul, his own spiritual or private unity with Deity, and thereby denying Him all outward or merely natu-

ral existence, all existence outside of the human bosom, he did by necessary implication utter the most universal of truths, and kindle a flame which shall yet enlighten every man that comes into the world. He did not give this truth a scientific statement, because he himself could have had no scientific apprehension of it, inasmuch as science had not yet justified it. His own history in fact was the grand starting point for the scientific hope of man. Science is not a record or aggregation of simple facts. It is a perception of the harmony which embeds all facts, of the unity which subtends all variety, and this perception does not exist out of the human mind. Science accordingly awaits the slow evolution of the human mind, based upon a very wide experience of nature and of history, and allows no one to forestall her *dicta* save in a purely mystical or intuitive way, the way here described of declaring a private personal pretension. All mystical human pretension seems to be nothing more than the blind effort of history to anticipate itself: seems to be only the flashing forth of divinity from the inner spheres of life, before the outer sphere is fitly organized to conduct it.

Science is the pure red blood of the mind. As in natural physiology, the blood is first generated of the food taken into the stomach, and thence after undergoing a slight discipline in the liver and lesser intestines, is taken up into the lungs to be

finally purified of all earthiness, and is *then for the first time delivered over to the heart*, to be sent forth in streams of copious refreshment to the whole body: so precisely is it with our spiritual physiology. For the knowledge which we take in at our senses at first undergoes a process of digestion or assimilation in the memory, which is the stomach of the mind: and is thence sublimated into the logical understanding, which is the lungs of the mind, where after being stripped of its local and accidental clothing, it becomes generalized into law or science, and so adapted to the use of the passions or affections, which are the heart of the mind, and which consequently send forth their perpetual streams of renewal and refreshment, through all the channels of practical life.

Now the literal facts of Christ's life, like all other literal facts, are not final, are not in themselves law or science, but only the material of law, only the provender of science. Their literal virtue ended with the death of Jesus, and the facts consequently fall into strict historic sequence and regimen. What makes the supreme worth of these facts to the scientific mind, is the immense spiritual width they enclose or embody, is the circumstance that they do prefigure in literal form, more exactly and fully than any other facts of history, the scientific hope and expectation of universal man. Science foresees a time when man *as man* shall

enjoy the dominion of the earth, when man *as man* shall enjoy the intimate fellowship of Deity, or of infinite goodness and truth. The history of Jesus perfectly typifies this perfected era. He the carpenter's son, undistinguished by learning, by accomplishments, or even by personal comeliness, the friend of publicans and sinners, living in ignominy and dying an accursed death, was yet the true Christ of God, and the heir of His empire in heaven and earth. It seems at first sight to be a purely personal claim, but as you look further you perceive that the claim was altogether spiritual, namely the humanitary temper of the sufferer, and therefore embraces every one of like temper. The glory of Jesus lies in this, that his personality refuses to be finited, or incessantly identifies itself with the broadest humanity. He continually evinced an acute annoyance from the misapprehension of his spirit on the part of his followers. The words that I speak unto you, said he in substance to them, are not statements of literal fact; they are spirit and life. I speak to you in figures, whose sense will be apparent when the divine spirit becomes more diffused. He incessantly complained of the sensuous and frivolous limitations which they put upon his language. Supposing that he was going to enjoy a *personal* dominion, and that he could therefore invest any person he pleased with a participation of its glories, they did

not hesitate to urge the shabbiest petitions in behalf of themselves and their children. So venal, sycophantic and mistaken was their homage, that they were even willing to resort to violence when his person was assailed. It was for a display of this sort, that Peter, whose zeal seemed always of a signally forward and flatulent character, incurred the famous rebuke, so expressive of cordial disgust,—Get thee behind me, Satan! But on all occasions he confessed himself unable to speak according to his own spirit, because of their debased understandings, and was obliged therefore to wrap up his wisdom in parables or fables, to save it from corruption.

But even in its literal import, the Christian doctrine has been an immense armory for humanity. For here was the divine power gathered in from all the fields of creation, and concentered in one most intelligible and consistent life. Here was the great and unknown God recalled from the void inane, whither none could follow and none could discern Him, and unconditionally made over to one of the humblest, and with respect to natural endowments one of the meanest of men. Henceforth Paganism, or the conception of a God in nature, and apart from man, was at an end. This lawless and terrible force, before which as revealed in the storm, the earthquake, the pestilence, the destroying locust, the nations bowed in abject

dread, and cultivated in themselves the sentiments and manners of slaves, became henceforth limited to strictly human dimensions, became in fact the measure of a very perfect man. To worship God in nature, to see him either in the calm or the tempest, became henceforth superstition, for his sole abode was the heart of a truly loving man, and his power exclusively exerted in the direction of his spiritual aggrandizement.

Accordingly you know how the Christian doctrine became the nucleus of ever-advancing humanitary ideas. For the Christ, or divine man, was personally identified with the lowest and most oppressed aspects of humanity. His marvellous exhibitions of power were all on the side of clemency and mercy to the poor and oppressed, and the church in espousing his gospel and lending its organization to the spread of his fame, gradually erected a bulwark for the humblest individual against the most ferocious despotisms. It will ever be the glory of the early church, that though in itself to all spiritual ideas it was a complete sot, its practical operation nevertheless was to inaugurate the responsibility of governments to humanity, to humane principles. The church actually sapped the foundation of Roman despotism in avouching the sacredness of the humblest individual in God's sight, and assuring him a destiny which the most potent of Cæsars might vainly aspire to share.

This was an entirely new thing in the earth for the poor serf, the miserable outcast and dependent, yea more for the condemned felon, to find himself recognized by a pompous and gorgeous priesthood, as having a like destiny with the most favored of mortals, and taught to claim spiritual equality with them. This was in fact the blood red wine of democracy suddenly infused into the veins of mankind, there to generate incalculable political and social issues.

For no sooner had the church got the control of the civil power, than governments were taught to become in a very real sense of the term paternal, or providential towards the people. The instruction of children was provided for. Public provision was made for the poor, as if the State was bound to sympathize in the wants of all her subjects, and provide for each in his degree. So much was this principle engrafted in the governmental conscience, that we find when the final rupture took place between England and Rome, Queen Elizabeth enacted a poor-law, making the whole land of the country chargeable before all things else with the support of the poor. In every land moreover sanctuaries were opened from the prevalent turbulence, where men and women being delivered from all mundane disquiets, allowed their thoughts free play with gospel lore, and learned ere long to agitate the profoundest metaphysical and ethical problems.

The monks became educators of the people in the rudiments of the natural sciences, and some of the most distinguished men in history have acknowledged that their genius was first enkindled at the lamp kept burning in a conventual cell. They, many of them, also became zealous observers of nature, explorers of her secret springs, hoping perchance to discover her *magnum arcanum*, not dreaming as yet that her greatest secret was man himself, God-endowed, God-freighted. Several of the useful arts were actually born of this monkish peace and retirement, and you all know how much the traditions of the church and its ritual necessities have contributed to the advancement of the fine arts, architecture, painting, printing, and so forth.

If you wish to see the difference between a living and dead church, compare the condition of the old church as I have just sketched it, with the performances of the modern church. The most salient achievement of the modern church is the shameless attempt of whose frustration you have lately read in the newspapers, to get up a miracle in a Romish church in France. The design of this miracle like that of all the present labors of the church, appears to have been to glorify the church in the eyes of the vulgar, to attract the devotion of the superstitious, and so renew the hold it once had upon popular pence. You may set this down

as an infallible test of a church, or any divine institution, that it cares only for humanitary ends, and is utterly indifferent to what befalls itself whether life or death, prosperity or extinction, so long as these ends may be promoted. Whenever a church has time to think of itself, of the honor and revenues due to itself, we may be altogether certain that its titles to honor have ceased, and that every penny of its revenues is a robbery.

Accordingly the treachery of the church to its own ideal, the memory of Jesus, is strikingly shown in the dishonor done, or rather attempted to be done him, by this abortive miracle. For, as a friend observed, it is an extremely contemptible sort of power to associate with the image of Jesus, the power of oozing useless blood. He thought the conspirators would have no chance to be believed, until they made the canvass leave off oozing blood, and ooze only nutritive loaves of bread, or succulent mutton and turnips, or anything else which might feed the poor, and so representatively exhibit his true spirit. Miracles of this sort would be eagerly credited by all the world, because they exhibit some faint reflection of Christ's manhood. But miracles of the other sort defeat themselves, prove Christ, in so far as they are credited, unworthy of any renown. For he would be a profound traitor to his own name and fame, could he now desire any personal recognition, any recogni-

tion above that of the humblest of men, any recognition above the sacred unity of humanity. The church accordingly will glean an admirable lesson from these baffled miracle-mongers, if it cease any longer to insult the common nature of man by a parade of Christ's personal superiority, and begin to soothe and adorn it by the inculcation of his spiritual unity and equality.

However, let not the church's present imbecility, her present utter abandonment to the lusts of self-love and the love of rule, blind us to the great service she rendered the world in times past, which was the practical destruction of caste among men, and the consequent outbirth of the democratic idea. The Christian priesthood, as M. Guizot has remarked, is not a caste, because it is not hereditary, and the hereditary feature is essential to caste. Every one who pleases may become a priest, and the ranks of the priesthood accordingly are recruited chiefly from the inferior classes. No, the fundamental postulate of the church which was the exclusive divinity of Jesus Christ, was utterly at variance with any natural privilege, with any natural inequality among men, and consequently has incessantly tended to democratize the nations. The first great outburst or assertion of this tendency was the Protestant Reformation, which was the proclamation of spiritual democracy, or of man's religious freedom. But from this spiritual demo-

cracy has lineally descended our present political democracy, or the doctrine of man's civil freedom, and out of this again has grown or rather is growing that auspicious social democracy, whose utterances are as yet but infantile and stammering, but which nevertheless clearly enough proclaims man's ethical or moral freedom.

All these vast humanitary results and tendencies affiliate themselves most strictly to the fundamental verity of Christianity, which is the dogma of Christ's divinity. For it was the distinction of Christ's personality, that it was altogether humanitary. His whole divinity lay in the fact of his having no interest apart from the welfare of universal man. He had no will apart from the will of God, the universal Father, which will of course could only be the equal blessing of all mankind. It is this which makes the name of Jesus more lustrous than any name in history, it is this which will ever make mankind prouder of that name than of any other, that he has absolutely no private personality, but has actually become identified to the imagination of the mass with purely humanitary or impersonal ideas. It is a name which has suggested no prisons, no gibbets, no fetters to human thought, but only the incessant softening and the final abolition of these brutalities. It has suggested only the sweetest relations between man and man, relations of accord and mutual charity,

until we know that nothing could be more incongruous with it, nothing more distasteful to it than direct homage. Christ alone it appears to me among men claims this grandeur, that he grows exalted in proportion as he becomes personally abased, and is never so dishonored spiritually, as when he is honored for his own sake or personally.

It is this entirely spiritual or humanitary worth of Jesus, which makes the difference between him and Mahomet. The name of Jesus has based all our superb world of Christendom, one day of which, as the poet sings, whatever be its absolute defects, yet lends an ampler bound to the pulse than a hundred years of Heathendom. The symbol of Christ's dominion was wine, showing it to be spiritual. The symbol of Mahomet's dominion was water, showing it to be material. Wine is not a natural product. It is a product of regenerate nature, of nature which has undergone a process of spiritual fermentation. Christ's doctrine therefore has always recognized a spirit in man above his nature, a spirit of individuality, a spirit of Divinity, and hence Christian manhood has been always progressive, has been wreathed and garlanded with power, as one to whom the conquest of the world truly belonged. But look at that profane sty of Mahommedanism in the comparison, and observe the dead level of life which binds it. No genius, no invention, no arts, no sciences,

the man of to-day as wise but no wiser than the man of a thousand years ago, a despotism totally irresponsible to humanity, and over all a doctrine of fate so stony as to stifle every germination of the divine life in man.

Water is a very good element for bodily or material purposes. It washes away outward defilement, and is able also to quench thirst on occasion. But wine makes glad the heart of man, unlocks the gates of heaven to his sensuous imagination, and gives him a foretaste of that divine or self-poised life which shall one day be his. Hence even drunkenness has its profound humanitary significance, and will never be cured by any amount of total-abstinence pledging, but only by the gradual elevation of entire humanity out of the mire of self-contempt, and into the unlimited fellowship of Christ's divinity. Wine was his proper symbol for two reasons: first because it is a product of regenerate nature, and therefore symbolizes the conquest which man is destined to achieve over the material world, or the perfect subjection of nature to him; and secondly, because it makes glad the soul, thereby symbolizing the effect of his doctrine in lifting its followers into self-respect, and teaching them to find all divine life and joy exclusively within themselves, exclusively within their own human souls, and not in any outward and finite source.

But I must draw to a close. The idea of God or a power above nature, yet intimately related to it, is the essence of Paganism. Christianity accepts the idea of divine or supernatural power, but lifts it completely out of nature and identifies it with man. It fulfils the idea of Deity in that of humanity. It sublimates the conception of God as a power operating merely natural effects, into that of the Lord, or a power operating only human effects, that is the complete reduction of nature and society to human use, the use of universal man. Hence spiritual Christianity, or the doctrine of the divine natural man, is in closest amity with science, whose great purpose is to declare nature's orderly subjection to man, by revealing to him the laws which ensure its permanent dominion.

Doubtless this gospel provokes the opposition of prejudice and of class-interests, because it rings the knell of selfishness. Our typical priesthood forbids our exacting orderly relations with nature and society. It claims that nature and society are essentially superior to us, and control our destiny. It maintains that a real antagonism exists between Creator and creature, not an apparent antagonism growing out of our infantile physical and social conditions, but an *essential*, and therefore eternal one. It says that God knows in an intimate manner all our sufferings, and still leaves us subject to them; that he has a lively perception of the pang

we feel when we have the toothache, and literally sees the burglar bearing away our property from us. Science on the other hand smiles at all this as puerility. It declares that God has not the slightest conception of toothache, and utterly discredits burglary. Because continually imparting Himself as He does to us, continually communicating His own infinite selfhood, He cannot suppose us such insufferable dolts *as not to exact from nature and society an organization adapted to this selfhood*, namely, teeth which shall be impervious to decay, and relations of fellowship with our kind which shall exclude all violence. Thus in predicting a healthy *physique* and a healthy *morale*, as among the divine intentions towards man on the earth, science affronts the priesthood, because the tenure of its existence supposes reciprocally malignant relations between God and man.

If our priesthood should long continue to contradict the disinterested testimony of science, if they should obdurately deny all our Godward instincts, and make themselves ministers of despair rather than hope, then we must in the name of the Lord, or the coming perfect man, insist upon a change of priesthood. If the priesthood do not know how to justify our Godward hopes and aspirations, it is time their license were revoked. The theory of the priesthood, as an order of men interposing between God and us, and furnishing the channel of

the divine bounty, imposes an immense responsibility upon them. We shall never get any valuable service from them until we seriously hold them to this responsibility. If we have reason to think that it is not God's will that the earth should be a pandemonium, if our best instincts of His perfection teach us that He would like to see the life of man harmonized with itself, and all sorrow and suffering flee away forever: and if at the same time there be an order of men professing to be the medium and executors of God's will upon earth: then we should insist upon these men fulfilling all our instincts, and satisfying our every want. If they attempt to pooh-pooh us, we should in true fidelity to them stop their allowance; we should give them an actual minimum of subsistence, an actual minimum of meat, drink, and sleep, until they do their duty, or else resign. *No one has a right to assume that grand vocation lightly. His business is to do all it imports that he should do, or else give way to abler hands.* But to support such imbecile and sham priests as we have now, men who see humanity suffering unprecedented woes, and yet are able to do nothing but strain out tedious sermons upon the things that were thought, or the words that were said, or the deeds that were done, ages ago: men who cannot only *do* nothing, but officially *feel* nothing for these woes, and in some cases account it a downright infidelity to God to attempt

any effectual removal of them: to give such holiday creatures as these the honor due to God's ministers, it strikes me is an odious insult to God, for which all our skins will yet have to tingle.

Let us therefore treat our priests as honest men, as men who themselves believe in the sublime office they have aspired to fill. Let us go to the clergy of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston for example, and insist that if they be God's ministers and coadjutors as they claim, they immediately fulfil all God's will in their several dioceses: that they diligently seek out the means of banishing ignorance, intemperance, licentiousness and loathsome want, and of introducing clean and sweet relations between man and man, and so putting an end to the shocking disorder which now reigns there. They who are worthy among them will thank us for believing in them, and keeping them up to the mark of their great office. They have voluntarily assumed it with all its honors. Let us see therefore that they fulfil its duties also to the letter, under penalty of destitution, or of prompt resignation. For the man who does not work, but only breathes hard and makes believe to work, should not be fed, says an apostle. If then our self-called stewards of God accept the former alternative, or starve, they will have died honorably in the discharge of their great duty, and an abundant entrance will be made for them into the joys of

men of like honesty on high. Then at least they shall be well off. But if they be of a less strenuous fibre, and prefer the latter alternative, which is to resign, then at least *we* shall be well off: that is to say, we shall stand a chance at last of getting a capable or real priesthood, the priesthood of men of science, who ask no tithes indeed, nor cherish any aspirations after a vestural righteousness, but are yet amply able to instruct us in all the conditions necessary to inaugurate the divine life on earth.

MISCELLANIES.

THE LAWS OF CREATION.

WHO is the true creature of God? It is not a finite person like myself, standing five feet six or eight inches in his shoes, with fair hair and blue eyes, a competent knowledge of Greek, and an amiable disposition. Because if this were the true or primary creature of God, then inasmuch as there is an unlimited number of persons thus or similarly finited in the world, the inference would be that the Creator had made either a great number of disunited creatures, and so disparaged His own unity, or else a great number of identical creatures, and so dishonored His own variety. No, God's creature is one. He makes MAN, not men. His true creature is unitary and infinite, revealing himself indeed in every finite form, but compromised by none.

The reader therefore and myself, in so far as we identify ourselves with our finite side, in so far as we hold ourselves *to be* only what we outwardly *appear*, or what our physical and moral qualities

pronounce us to be, do really exclude ourselves from true manhood, do really exile ourselves from the creation of God.

My proposition is perfectly intelligible. I say that I am not *quoad* my physical and moral attributes, or my finite and differential side, the true creature of God. For example, suppose me to be five feet eight inches in height, to have blue eyes, a straight nose, and so forth. Now if I am in these respects the true creature of God, if God have the slightest cognizance of me as thus defined, then it follows that my neighbor who measures six feet, with dark eyes and Roman nose, is not the true creature of God, is not cognizable by Him, because, inasmuch as God is one or harmonic with Himself, His creature must needs be one or harmonic with himself also, and I in all the particulars in question am obviously not one with, but different from my neighbor.

Clearly then I am not the true creature of God as I stand physically defined. Let us see whether my moral differences from other men give me any better claim to the title.

Suppose me to act in all my social relations with invariable propriety. Suppose me to have the welfare of society at heart, and to fulfil all my obligations to it with so much fidelity, as to win from every one the praise of goodness, and bequeath an untarnished name to my descendants. Now if

in these respects I am the true creature of God, if God recognize me as thus morally defined, then obviously the man of opposite morality, the man who systematically neglects his social obligations, bequeathing an infamous name to his offspring, is not the true creature of God, cannot be recognized by Him, because the creature of God is necessarily, like God, harmonic with himself, and here is no harmony, but utter conflict.

As clearly then, my moral attributes do not pronounce me the true creature of God. And hence I repeat that *quoad* his physical and moral qualities, or his finite and differential side, man has no claim to be considered the true creature of God.

But hereupon the reader inquires: "What shall we do with the facts of our finite history? They are veritable facts, and ask to be accounted for. Where do these finite facts, or the realm of history, belong? Clearly they do not belong to the creative sphere: they must accordingly fall within the created one."

Exactly so. The entire realm of the finite, the spheres of nature and society, fall within God's true creature, are included in his subjectivity. They are incidental to him, not accidental. They do not supervene upon his formation, they are involved in his formation. *He* cannot be subject to them as we have seen; wherefore they must be subject to him: because as God's creature like God

himself, is necessarily one and infinite, he must of course disown every finite or disunited object, every object indeed short of God himself, which brings the whole realm of the differential and finite *within* his proper subjectivity.

This statement I am aware does not tally with our sensuous modes of conceiving creation. Our infantile or unscientific theologies envisage creation purely as an historical process, or as a phenomenon of time and space, and allege that we have a literally exact record of it in the Mosaic and other histories. They regard creation as an act of God's arbitrary will, in contradistinction to His essential perfections, or his Love and Wisdom, and hence reduce it from a rational or graduated process involving a sphere of ends, a sphere of means, and a sphere of effects, into a mere brute mechanism. But all this is very puerile, as an attentive examination will not fail to show.

History means the succession of events in time and space. Now if creation be an historical fact, it falls of course within the limits of time and space. But if so, that is if creation fall within time and space, then there must have been a time when creation was not, and a space where it was not. But space and time have a purely subjective or intellectual existence. They have no existence *per se:* no existence apart from the finite understanding: they are simply names of the most gen-

eral laws or modes by which my senses acquire knowledge. Hence if you take away creation, and allow time and space to survive, you of course necessarily make them attach to the creator, since He is the only living subject that remains: you make them laws or modes of His perception also, and consequently finite His existence. But a finite creator is an absurdity, is a contradiction. Hence the infinitude of the creator binds you to deny an historical creation, forbids you to suppose that God's creation falls within the limits of space and time.

But here it will be replied to me, that if I do not make creation to fall within space and time, I make it purely spiritual, and so confound creator and creature. Let us understand the precise force of this objection. The objector says that when I take creation out of history, or deny its subjection to the laws of space and time—when, in other words, I say that there never was a time when, nor a space where, creation was not—I do virtually deny all distinction between creator and creature, between infinite and finite: I do virtually clothe the creature with eternity and infinity.

This objection, you perceive, proceeds upon the postulate that eternity means endless time and infinity endless space. The objector very properly looks upon my saying "that there never was a time when, nor a space where, creation was not,"

as equivalent to saying "that the creature covers all time and all space, or involves it in himself." And thereupon he charges me with giving the creature eternity and infinity. Why? For no other reason obviously, than that all time, time without end, is convertible in his view with eternity, and that all space, or space without end, is convertible in his view with infinity. Hence I repeat that the objection I am answering proceeds upon the notion that eternity means endless time and infinity endless space. If they do mean these things, the objection is fatal to our progress. If they do not mean these things, the objection will very probably promote our progress. In point of fact then do they mean these things? Does infinity mean endless space? Does eternity mean endless time?

I reply to both questions in the negative. Eternity and infinity cannot mean endless time and space, because being attributes of the divine being, they must necessarily exclude all time and space. We say that God is infinite and eternal. But if infinity mean endless space, then in calling God infinite we identify him with all the actual spaces of the universe. And if eternity mean endless time, then in calling God eternal, we identify Him with all the actual times of the universe since the beginning of history. The spaces and times of the universe on this hypothesis are undistinguisha-

ble from the divine substance. But the spaces and times of the universe are only a most general formula for Nature. Hence the hypothesis in question makes God and Nature identical. But in making God identical with Nature, you degrade Him to our servitude, since Nature is intrinsically and incontestably servile to human use. Now in thus degrading God you of course deny Him, since your inevitable conception of Him implies His essential supremacy to man, instead of His servitude.

Such are some of the obvious consequences involved in the notion that God's eternity is made up of time, and His infinity made up of space. And these consequences suffice to show: not merely that eternity and infinity do not mean endless time and space, which is all that my argument demanded, but also: that the positive conception of eternity utterly excludes the element of time, and the positive conception of infinity utterly excludes the element of space.

But the objection we have been considering owns a subtler form. The objector may say, that in taking creation out of time and space, I make it purely subjective, and THEREFORE deny the objective sphere of human existence. If this objection prove well-grounded, it will of course be fatal, because to affirm a subject without an object, is to affirm the absoluteness of the subject, and so deny creation altogether.

But the objection is not well-grounded. It is indeed utterly futile, being built as I shall show upon a sheer fallacy of observation. It implies that the objective sphere of existence is necessarily external or posterior to the subjective. The old theology, and all concurrent philosophical systems, are based upon this notion. They all imply that the subject is prior to the object, that the subject indeed determines the object. Hence they place the realm of nature, or the finite universe, in the relation of object to man, and man in the relation of subject to it. And accordingly when you declare man to be essentially superior to his material organization, when you pronounce him essentially independent of external law or limit, they charge you with making him independent of all law or limit whatever: they charge you in short with destroying the object, the source, the inspiration of his action.

But this is the mere dotage and delirium of theology and philosophy. It is moreover the denial of Christianity in its inmost fibre and substance. The objective sphere of human existence is not material, is not comprehended by the laws of time and space. The material universe, were it a myriad times more august than it is, does not furnish the true object of man's activity. It is simply the theatre of that activity. The objective sphere of human existence is exclusively an inward or ideal

sphere, invisible and inaudible to sense. Here alone is found the object of man's activity: here alone descends that life or inspiration of which the material world comprises only the shallow manifestation, reverberates only the indistinct echo.

Now all this is inevitably true, *purely because the object is in all cases and of necessity logically prior and interior to the subject.* These terms *object* and *subject* are two terms of relation employed by logicians, to discriminate the essential elements of all life or action. Here, for example, is an action: I place my hat on my head. This action acknowledges the conjoint parentage or congress of two elements, one originating or suggesting, the other mediating or serving, 1. a desire in me to protect my head from the weather; 2. an obedient physical organization. Were it not for the desire I had to protect my head, my physical organization would have remained inert, and the action accordingly would not have taken place. Now the first or propagative element of this action is denominated its object, and the second or instrumental element is denominated its subject. The first element is the father of the action, the second is its mother. Were it not for the father, that is for the object I had in view, the action could not have been conceived. Were it not for the mother, that is for the subject physical organization, the conception could not have been embodied or carried

out. And consequently without their mutual co-operation, the action could never have got birth, would never have seen the light.

Again, I take a cup of tea. The paternal or objective element of this action is the gratification of my palate; the maternal or subjective element is my physical organization. Take these away and you destroy the parentage, and therein of course the life of the action. Take the object away, as when for example I do not take the tea willingly but at the bidding of another: in that case you destroy its paternity and make it a bastard action, being legitimated by the mother alone. Take the subject away, as when for example I very much desire tea, but am unable to get it: in this case you destroy the maternity of the action, and consequently prevent its incarnation or embodiment. The action has only a fœtal or inchoate existence.

From these familiar illustrations you will perceive, that the idea of object is logically prior or interior to that of subject, as the idea of father is prior or interior to that of mother, or the idea of end prior or interior to that of means. Hence it follows that in taking creation out of space and time, or making it purely subjective, you not only do *not* take from the creature his objective sphere, but you render it impossible ever to take it from him. You indeed give up a finite and perishable

objectivity, or the world of time and space; but you gain instead the internal and deathless objectivity of infinite goodness and truth. You displace mammon and substitute God.

I said, a little while ago, that the prevalent error of theology and philosophy was based upon a fallacy of observation. The fallacy consists *in making the phenomena of the senses to be external to the senses instead of internal to them.* Let me make this perfectly clear. It has long been the wont of theology and philosophy to pronounce man the *subject* of his senses, and their judgment in this respect has been amply warranted by appearances. For in the infancy of human development, nature or the sensible world appears truly to dominate the life of man. But now as all existence falls within the categories of subject and object, we are of course obliged to call whatsoever is not the *subject* of sense, whatsoever is spatially distinguished from the subject, by the name of *object.* Thus the tree on the lawn, the book on my table, the vase on the mantelpiece, being separated by space from me the reputed *seeing subject*, become themselves necessarily *seen objects*, or objects of sight. On this popular habitude then, of regarding the phenomena or facts of the senses as *objects* of the senses instead of *subjects* of them, the current theology and philosophy ground their sweeping generalization that the material universe is objective to man. So

much for the history of the error. Let us now attempt its correction.

The error has no inherent strength. It thrives only as an inference from our assumed subjectivity to the senses. For example: I see a rose on the table. Hence the rose is called an object of sight. Or I smell it. Hence it is called an object of smell. Or I feel it. Hence it is called an object of touch. But why *object?* An object is something which lies over against, or opposes, the subject; which refuses to be resolved into the subject; which indeed determines the subject, and from whose grasp the latter can by no means escape. But, surely, the phenomena of nature bear no such controlling relation to the senses as this. It is the senses which determine them, not they the senses. They are simply facts or contents of the senses. They are not opposite to the senses. They are involved or embodied in the senses. The senses clothe them with all their personality. That rose, for example, is a mere fact of sight, smell, and touch, nothing more and nothing less. That is to say, if you resolve it into its sensible qualities, the qualities of color, fragrance, form, and so forth, and then inquire what personality it has beyond these qualities, the answer will be 0. Take away my sensuous organization therefore, and you virtually take away the rose. You cannot conceive of it existing save in sensible conditions, conditions

determined by sense, conditions of size, color, fragrance, shape, and so forth. It is a purely phenomenal existence in short, and if therefore you take away the intelligence to which it is phenomenal, you of course take away its own existence. It has no selfhood out of relation to the senses. The senses are its world, in which alone it lives and moves and has its being. And so not merely of the rose, but of *all* the mis-called objects of nature, from the central fire of the universe, down to the tiniest pebble that strews the shore of the sea. Not one of them has an existence out of relation to the senses of man. Take away from any of them its sensible qualities, those things which make it appreciable to our senses, and you take away its total selfhood or individuality.

Thus nature, or the universe of time and space, is properly subject to the senses. The senses include or affirm it. They are its portals opening into man. My senses do not open from me into nature, they open from nature into me. They belong to nature. They hinge upon her exclusively. I withdraw myself, and they remain fast closed, revealing nothing. I go to sleep, that is withdraw myself into my true spiritual clime, and they are useless. You may lift up the latch of my eyes and unroll the loveliest landscape before them: the sense remains obstinately dull. You may play the sweetest music: but the ear is deaf to the

strain. You may present the most odorous bouquet to my nostrils: but its fragrance is wasted on the desert air. Why? Simply, as I said before, because the senses do not open into nature, but out of it; because they open out of nature into man. If the senses opened into nature, that is to say, if the eye discerned the beauty of the landscape, or the nose perceived the fragrance of the flower, or the ear enjoyed the harmonies of sound and so forth, they would of course do so at all times under the same circumstances, or whenever the same things should be presented to them. But they never do so at any time, under any circumstances. They are merely a part of nature's organization, through which *I* see, smell, hear, taste, and touch. Consequently when *I* withdraw myself, as in sleep or death, into my inner chambers, or my spiritual house, these admirable doors and windows are darkened, and soon fall into decay. *I* was their sole object. *I* was the only object of their life, and consequently when *I* grow tired of their shews and withdraw, their life ends. *I* am their light and their life. When *I* depart therefore they immediately cease to act. The natural universe, so far as I am concerned, perishes.

Do not misconceive me. I do not say that the natural universe becomes altered *in se* by my death, nor yet by the death of all the men now living. I do not say that it would have any less

being then than it has now, since that would be impossible, inasmuch as it is *now* totally destitute of being, and a destitution which is total excludes increase. I do not say that the natural world would then *go into* nonentity, because it *is now*, and always must be, *nonentity*, from the simple circumstance that it has only a relative existence, an existence in relation to our senses. In other words I maintain that sensible entity or existence, is logical nonentity or nonexistence. The natural world exists only to my senses, not to my understanding. Take me who *stand under* this sensible organization away, and it immediately vanishes. Hence I say that the natural universe is not being, but only the appearance or phenomenon of being to a finite intelligence, an intelligence finited by the senses. Abstract this intelligence, and the appearance in question necessarily vanishes. I have no idea of course if you should take from the earth to-day all the sensitive life it embosoms, that the earth would be any the less a fact of sense to-morrow. I am quite sure on the contrary that the sky would be as concave, and the grass as green, after that event as they now are. Why? Because this sensible, this phenomenal, this finite personality is intrinsic to them and inseparable from them, is all the personality they claim. If in the event supposed, they should drop this their intrinsic character; if they should merge their distinctive outlines into

one indistinguishable mass, and so become inappreciable to a finite understanding: if in other words they should go in the event supposed into *sensible* annihilation: then clearly they would claim a higher personality—a personality appreciable to an infinite intelligence, and consequently itself infinite.

Of course, in the event supposed, no one would be present to observe that the grass was green, and the heavens concave. But the existence of a fact is no way contingent upon the knowledge or observation of it. The grass is not *made* green by the operation of our eye, nor the sky *made* concave. They are only *pronounced* so. The eye pronounces the grass green *per se*, and the sky concave *per se*, so that grass which is not green when growing, and a sky which does not overarch the earth, are neither grass nor sky to us. Thus the selfhood or personality of natural things is altogether determined or pronounced by the senses. It has no existence save to a finite intelligence, an intelligence whose knowledge is derived through the senses. An infinite intelligence of necessity knows no distinction between sky and earth, between heaven and hell, between blue and green, in short has no knowledge of *things*. I say "of necessity," because his intelligence is underived through the senses, and it is only the senses which give us the knowledge of things.

BERKELEY AND HIS CRITICS.

As a *pendant* to the preceding paper, I wish to say a few words in rectification of a common misapprehension of Idealism, as propounded by Bishop Berkeley.

I do not think that the Bishop's statement was calculated to obviate all misconception, but I am surprised that any candid inquirer should long fail to supply his omissions. Evidently he intended nothing more than to discriminate between being and existence, between substance and form. He wished to shew that the sensible world was simply formal, existential, or phenomenal, and that if you took away therefore that thing which determined its form, its existence, its phenomenality, you necessarily took away itself. You rendered it, that is to say, incognizable. For its selfhood was not absolute, but relative, or conditioned upon a certain limited intelligence. Hence if you destroy

its relation to this intelligence, you necessarily destroy itself. He did not mean of course that you would alter its sensible qualities, that you would remove it from time and space, that you would reduce it to physical nonentity. For his whole proposition was, that its sensible qualities were inseparable from it, that it could *not* conceivably transcend the limits of time and space, that its entity was under all circumstances *physical* only. It is not being, he said, but only the appearance or manifestation of being, and hence if you destroy its sensible qualities, those qualities which make it appear, which give it visibility, you destroy its very self.

But his readers apparently took little pains to understand him. Both the learned and unlearned conceived him to mean, that the finite universe, which he said was merely a congeries of sensible qualities, would, if the senses were abstracted, go into *sensible* annihilation. Thus Dr. Johnson, whose towering dogmatism often needed a very broad basis of stupidity, fancied that he refuted Berkeley by stamping on the ground. Had the Doctor consulted his head instead of his heels, as would have been merely decorous under the circumstances, he would have found that Berkeley had no intention to affirm the *sensible* nonentity of matter, but only its *supersensuous* or logical nonentity. The Bishop had an idea, perhaps not fully acknowledged by

his own consciousness, that man was the real *substratum* of the universe, the only logical or supersensuous entity, and that matter accordingly had a merely superficial or phenomenal existence. At all events, whatsoever may have been his theory of creation, he declared that matter existed *only* in forms appreciable to sense, and challenged his opponents to abstract it from these forms, and put it into logical or supersensuous ones. Whereupon the Doctor *pirouetted*, that is to say, made the levity of his heels do more in a moment to confirm Berkeley's position, than the weight of his head could have ever done to disturb it. Other learned doctors have intensified this simple *pirouette* of Johnson into elaborate reels and fandangoes, by gravely insisting that Berkeley, because he denied material *substance*, was bound to make a downy descent of the most irrelevant precipices, and dissipate every well-affected lamp-post by the bare presentation of his cranium.

Clearly the incompetency of this criticism betrays the misconception on which it is founded. The critics, as I said before, regarded Berkeley as maintaining that the external world, if cognized apart from the senses of man, would go into *sensible* nonexistence. The mind of man is so immersed in sense that he deems the sensible world the real world, and the natural life his essential life. Hence when Berkeley declared that this sensible

world was a pure surface, existing only to the senses or the finite intelligence, and that if you abstracted the senses therefore, it would disappear *in toto*, they supposed him to mean that it would perish *in se* or *as to those sensible properties which he all the while declared inseparable from it.* Thus they stamped their foolish feet in refutation, and defied Berkeley to a gratuitous personal controversy with lamp-posts and precipices. But Berkeley should have told them explicitly (what he did implicitly) that the senses were already, by the very terms of the question, eliminated, or put out of doors; that he commenced by abstracting the senses, and that he could not therefore mean to say that the outer world would *thereupon* become *sensibly* nonexistent, or disappear to those senses. This would be an identical proposition. "I *commence*," he says, "by annulling the senses or excluding their testimony. Of course then by the very terms of the proposition, you are to conceive the senses already inoperative, or what is the same thing, the external world already dead to them. *This is your starting point or premiss.* And now having thus placed you, having put you in thought out of all sensible relation to the external world, I proceed to ask you what you discern of it? It is idle for you to recount its sensible qualities, for this is only recalling it from memory; it is illogical for you to stamp your feet, because your very position

implies that your feet are palsied or without feeling. I suppose the physical consciousness in you to be entirely lulled asleep for the time; and *then* ask if you perceive any difference between the rose and the thorn, between heaven and earth, between honey and vinegar, between black and white, between noise and silence, between hard and soft? What! no answer? I conclude then from your silence that no such difference exists except to the senses, and that the external world accordingly which is wholly identical with these differences, has only a sensible existence. Had it a logical or supersensuous existence, that is to say, had you any perception of sky or earth, of honey or vinegar, of hard or soft, save what the senses gave you, you would not fail to report the fact."

Thus you perceive that Berkeley did not mean to say, that when men sleep or die, either one or all men, the earth becomes defunct *in se*, or goes into sensible annihilation. He merely meant to say that it became incognizable to any higher intelligence. His idea was that it was a mode of existence known only to a finite intelligence, an intelligence bounded by the bodily senses and that consequently, when you should unbind or *in*-finite that intelligence by the sleep or death of the body, it would become utterly unknown.

Berkeley had no more perception of sensible annihilation or nothingness than his *quasi* antago-

nists had. No such state indeed is either possible or conceivable, because it involves a two-fold contradiction. The senses are conversant only with *things*. Hence to suppose a state of "sensible annihilation or nothingness," a state in which one will be sensible of nothing whatever, is on the one hand to suppose a void and so deny your predicate, and on the other to suppose something which shall be sensible of that void, and so deny your subject. The only positive meaning the words bear is that of logical or spiritual fullness. Sensible nonentity is logical or rational completeness. To be sensibly annihilated is to be spiritually pronounced. This sensible world is itself nonentity, compared with that inner or spiritual world from which it depends, because it bears to that world the relation merely of form or appearance to substance, of effect to cause. There is no nonentity beyond this. There is no nonentity but this which is capable of being rationally affirmed. For every thing which is capable of being rationally affirmed, must fall within the category of being or form, of object or subject. That is to say it must either be or appear to be before we can affirm any thing of it. To suppose therefore a nonentity ulterior to the sensible world, a nonentity which shall be absolute, denying both being and form, knowing neither beginning nor middle nor end, admitting no object and excluding every subject, is to suppose a state

which by its own confession can never be realized, and so to stultify oneself. It is to set the imagination upon the fool's errand, who has his labor for his pains.

Thus guarded from misapprehension, it seems to me that Idealism is not to be resisted, at least my understanding fully affirms it, for Idealism does nothing but assert the purely phenomenal nature of material things. I must hold to this conclusion, because I insist upon God's essential *humanity*, and upon man consequently as His only true creature. Whatever exists else, exists only in subordination to man, is included in his existence. Thus the entire realm of nature, or the universe of time and space, is involved in his proper subjectivity. I wish to be taken literally. I wish to be understood as saying, not only that every mineral, every vegetable, and every animal existence, but also that every star whether wandering or fixed, every sun and every system of suns, within the flaming walls of space—whatsoe'er the heaven of heavens embosoms, or the misconceived depths of hell—is contained in man, and draws its nutriment only from the paps of his great destiny. Of course I do not speak of the finite or differential man in this place, but of the unitary or universal man: not of man viewed as John Smith merely or Isaac Newton, but of the grand and living unity out of which these superficial varie-

ties, called John Smith and Isaac Newton, spring. John Smith and Isaac Newton, in so far as these names characterize the men, that is to say in so far as these men fall within the sphere of the senses, are only vegetable and animal existences: what is distinctively human about them, what is substantial and infinite in them, is their active force, and this force lies beyond the sphere of sense, belongs exclusively to the ideal sphere, whence it reveals itself only in every beautiful word and action. These men accordingly, the John Smiths and Isaac Newtons, in fact all *men* properly speaking, are included in the sensible universe, and with it belong to man's proper subjectivity, are the outgrowth of his destiny.

GOD.

By God we always mean an absolutely perfect or infinite being: and by a being of absolute perfection or infinitude we mean one in whom object and subject, or internal and external, are essentially one.

Such is our idea of absolute perfection, as consisting in an *essential* unity or harmony of internal and external, or object and subject. God we say is omniscient and omnipotent, meaning thereby that his perception and action are not born of a marriage or educated union of his affection and intelligence, or his internal and external principle, but of their essential and inviolable unity. A thing may seem very good to my affection, and yet may not seem true or right to my intellect, because my affection and intellect are not naturally one, but owe their unity to culture. My perception and action consequently are obliged to

wait the marriage or *educated* union of these principles in me, before they can get birth. But with God the case is otherwise. He expresses the *essential* unity of love and wisdom, goodness and truth, internal and external, object and subject. And the essential unity of these things, a unity which is independent of culture, which is not educated or born of experience, obviously disowns history, or denies the subject any phenomenal activity, any action conditioned in time and space. For it renders him *essentially* active, or active *in se*, so utterly destroying His passive side. And to be *essentially* active, to be active in virtue of one's very self, and not merely by virtue of one's will, is to be CREATIVE.

Such accordingly is the distinctive character we ascribe to God, namely, that He creates or gives being to all things. It is not that He acts from an end or object to a result, but that He creates. The difference between creating and acting, is the difference between spontaneity and will. To create is in plain English to give being to things, and the giving being to things is obviously not a voluntary but a spontaneous procedure. For to have a will in regard to things implies that the things themselves are already in being, or stand related to your affection and thought, and therefore limit your activity to some modification of their form, or their relation to other things. Action is volun-

tary and phenomenal merely, dating from the surface or extremities. Creation is spontaneous and substantial, dating from the very centre or selfhood. The one is a finite fact necessarily built up of space and time. The other is an infinite and eternal fact, or a fact which utterly ignores both space and time.

For the very idea of creating is the giving being to things spontaneously, or by virtue of one's proper selfhood alone. If God made things out of preëxistent matter only, we should then not call Him a creator, but only a maker, like ourselves. No, we say, "He makes all things out of nothing," meaning thereby that He creates them, or gives being to them by his proper selfhood or substance alone. He Himself constitutes the sole being of the universe. And consequently since He is infinite and eternal, the being of the things transcends the spheres of space and time. Their phenomenality, or appearance to our sensuous intelligence, involves space and time; but their being,—their substance—is God himself, and is therefore both infinite or devoid of space, and eternal or devoid of time. There never was a space where nor a time when things began to *be*, because as God himself constitutes the being of all things, their being disclaims a temporal and spatial origin. Their being begins and ends only in infinite goodness, truth, and beauty, and knows

no finite tenure. Their phenomenality, their self-consciousness, or manifestation to the senses, is I admit utterly conditioned in space and time: but clearly the sensible manifestation of a thing, or its self-consciousness, does not give it being. On the contrary, the phenomenality of a thing always presupposes its being.

God's perfection then being creative and standing therefore in Himself alone, it is quite evident that it disclaims both physical and moral qualities, disclaims in fact all passivity. In ascribing a universal creation to Him we necessarily deny Him all such perfection as accrues *ab extra*, or grows out of his relations to other beings, because as He constitutes the being of all things, nothing can by possibility be exterior to Him. He must of necessity embosom all things that have being. Thus His perfection is destitute both of physical and moral dimension. He can have no spatial or bodily dimension, because this would imply finiteness or life external to Him, and so deny His omnipresence in creation. And He must be equally free of moral dimension, because morality implies fellowship or equality, and who is God's fellow or equal? Morality supposes will or voluntary action, and voluntary action supposes want, which the idea of creative power excludes. Voluntary action as we have just seen is a mark of finite or phenomenal life, because it is born of a *marriage* or educated

congress between affection and understanding, and not of their essential unity.

Thus in ascribing to God His true infinitude, an essential perfection, a perfection which inheres in himself, and denies any accidental source, we necessarily exclude all physical and moral attributes from Him. We assign Him in fact a purely ideal personality. He is essentially active, active not in his hands and feet merely, as we are, but active *in himself*—that is creative, or giving being to all things. His peculiarity, his glory, His perfection as we have seen, lies in giving being to all things—not in giving them form merely or relative being—but absolute being or being in Himself. And clearly he who creates all things, He who gives being to the universe of things comprehended within space and time, *does not Himself fall within that universe*, is himself utterly independent of space and time: that is to say, claims a purely ideal being.

MAN.

If we attentively consider the statement of the preceding paper, we shall not be able to deny that the divine perfection is strictly though very grandly human. In which case also we shall not be able to deny, that man is the lineal and only offspring of Deity.

For what all the world over is the distinctive mark of manhood? It is not physical subjectivity or subjection to nature, for the vegetable is far more exclusively the subject of its physical organization, than the animal is of his. And it is not moral subjectivity, or subjection to society, for many of the animals, take the bee for example, or the ant, or the beaver, greatly excel the best of men in this respect. No, the grand distinctive trait of man is his subjection to an ideal selfhood, or his power of acting, not in obedience to either physical or social constraint, but in obedience to his own ideas of goodness, truth, and beauty.

What distinguishes him from the lower existences is that his activity acknowledges an ideal end, or that his objective sphere of existence—that sphere which furnishes the end, the object, the inspiration of his action—lies within himself, within his natural subjectivity.

Accordingly if you look at the vegetable or animal existence, you will find a total destitution of this ideal subjectivity, of this subjection to an inward object. You will find the subject obeying an object completely foreign to himself, to wit, the use of man. His existence is essentially servile. The sole motive or object of it appears to be the service of man. Thus the plane of their objectivity falls *without* that of their subjectivity. And consequently they are totally unconscious of ideas, or the power of original action. Their passive existence, or susceptibility to pain and pleasure, is immense, but they are utterly destitute of spiritual force, of the power to control circumstances.—Man indeed exhibits the same infirmity in so far as he is involved in the vegetable and animal existence, or so long as he is held in subjection to the necessities of his physical and social subsistence. While food and raiment are still insecure to him, and the respect of his fellow-man unachieved, *he* also lives to a finite end, and fails to exhibit, at least in a *positive* manner, that true human worth which stands in the obedience

of an exclusively inward and infinite object, in the obedience of ideas.

I say a "positive" manner, because man does all the while chafe under this servitude. He will not accept mere physical and social subjection, mere physical and moral existence, as the limit of his destiny. Instead of contenting himself like the vegetable, with the bare supply of his physical wants, or like the animal, with the added supply also of his social wants, his instincts of infinitude, his instincts of Deity, drive him to seek their *excessive* gratification, and to hurry him into vice and crime. No animal has ever been capable of vice and crime. Why? Because no animal obeys an ideal end, or an end of action discretely interior or superior to its organization, to its natural self, and is consequently perfectly satisfied with the supply of its natural and social appetites.

But with man the case is different. His activity acknowledges only the inspiration of ideas. He obeys an end discretely interior, or superior, to both his physical and social organization, to both his natural and social interests, an ideal and infinite end, which incessantly moves him to give it actual expression or ultimation. But he cannot do this in any positive or beautiful manner, so long as nature and society constrain him, so long as his physical and social wants engross his action. The spheres of nature and society, in this state of things,

do not *serve* or promote his inward life, but impede its normal outflow, by restricting it to such low and secular channels. It is only the *antagonism* of these inward and outward, or infinite and finite spheres, which makes man vicious and criminal. Vice and crime are only an unscientific expression of his ideal infinitude, growing out of the magisterial instead of ministerial attitude of nature and society towards him. Vice expresses his attempt to actualize his ideal and essential infinitude, without the concurrence of nature. Crime expresses his attempt to actualize it, without the concurrence of society.

Thus the very vices and crimes of man place him above nature, deny his essential finiteness, proclaim his true subjection to be to an ideal and infinite object only.

And the testimony is undeniable. Consciousness perfectly ratifies it. All history proves that it is man's glory to act without prescription, or from the inspiration of what we call ideas, meaning thereby God. He, and he alone of all things, feels himself subject to an ideal or infinite selfhood, feels himself bound to reproduce or ultimate this infinite or ideal self in every form of action. The child and the immature or uneducated man, materialize this ideal by identifying it with some phenomenal person. The child identifies it with the parent, seeking above all things to commend itself to the

parent's approbation. The still sensuous, or uneducated man identifies it with his teacher or ruler, with his priest or king, with some visible great man, or some huge invisible person which he imagines to be God and seeks to propitiate. These are only rude germs of the truth, great coarse outlines adapted to the infantile or sensuous intelligence. The instructed man rejects them for the mere beggarly husks they are, and acknowledges only an inward and infinite ideal, which grows in loveliness as it grows in intimacy.

It is precisely this ideal subjectivity of his which man recognizes, when he attributes to himself responsibility, when he confesses himself a sinner. The sense of responsibility, the phenomenon of conscience, is peculiar to man. No one but he claims this grand endowment of responsibility, no one but he is capable of declaring himself a sinner, because no one but he feels an ideal selfhood, in other words perceives the external world to be truly subject to him. The animal feels no responsibility, has no conception of sin, because having no object but the gratification of appetite or passion, or what is the same thing, *feeling his organization to be imperative upon him*, and being therefore wholly destitute of ideas, he of course feels no conflict or disagreement between his internal and external, between infinite and finite. He rejoices when his appetite is gratified, he suffers when it is

starved. And this is all. But man knows a deeper joy than ever flowed from the indulgence of appetite, a profounder sorrow than ever flowed from the blight of passion. Often when his physical wants are perfectly satisfied, and his social relations replete with honor and advantage, his bosom confesses an aching void which all the wealth, of all the kingdoms of the world, would only make more insatiate.

He feels the lack of inward peace. He confesses a discord with his inmost self, a lack of harmony between his actual and ideal. Wealth and honor are good doubtless, but they are not good in comparison with that higher good, while as substitutes for it they are simply loathsome. Go to such a man, and seek to comfort him by alleging his many conventional claims to respect, his excellent character, his freedom from theft, adultery, murder, and so forth. What will be his reply?

He will say, "Surely, my friend, it was my duty to leave these things undone, my simple duty to society, and a great authority has taught us that it is only a very small soul which can find its righteousness, or the satisfaction of its aspirations, in the mere performance of duty. Life, to every one that has begun to feel its great reality, has a much more positive aspect than the performance of duty. It boasts a far richer gamut than the ten commandments, were they even multiplied by ten

thousand times ten. Commandments are of force only where life is not. What I crave is a positive righteousness, a righteousness which shall inhere in myself, which shall not be adventitious, which instead of accruing in any degree from my relations to others, shall make these relations humbly submissive to itself. I have no fear, as your statistics testify, on the score of morality, or my social responsibilities. It is a higher responsibility which occupies me, a responsibility to my vital source, to my vital self, which is God. God who is infinite beauty, infinite goodness, is my fountain of life. Clearly I discern that there should be harmony, that there should be proportion, between the fountain and the stream. Accordingly I mourn that this harmony is not more apparent in me. I mourn that my outward ties, the ties I am under to nature and society, so poorly image those I am under to my vital source. When I look upon myself as morally defined, as defined in the picture you just presented to me, when I see myself doing no murder, no theft, no adultery, keeping all the commandments of the law blamelessly, giving much alms, diligent at public worship, esteemed and honored by my fellow-citizens, I seem to myself very rich in luggage to be sure, but by no means rich in myself. Righteousness of this sort renders me plethoric and unhealthy. It stifles the free breath of my manhood. As a traveller who has

all his valuables in his portmanteau takes no pleasure in his journey, but incessantly watches lest some one rob him of his possessions, so he who prizes this sort of righteousness is rendered a miserable pack-horse for life, and gets no thanks moreover when life is ended.

"This sort of righteousness indeed is only a bribe on the part of society, to keep me content with, and subject to, itself. It incessantly says to me, Why are you not satisfied with the elevation I give you above knaves and harlots? See, I heap upon you all manner of favor: why do you not refrain therefore from exciting suspicion that my favor is not enough for man? Why do you not resolutely close your mouth, and forbear this insane and hypochondriacal course? I can only reply, that I cannot abide a righteousness gained at the expense of knaves and harlots, that it strikes me as shockingly undivine, nay more, as profoundly damnable. For when I look at my ideal or potential self, I see one whose riches lie within, and consequently disclaim every merely relative and finite characteristic. I see a man whose righteousness is consubstantiate with his inmost or vital self: a righteousness which descends from the very fountain of his being, and baptizes the whole earth of his finite or visible existence with daily and nightly dews. This man is full of unity with whatsoever wears the form of life, and has con-

sequently nothing either to gain or lose by contact with others. Life accordingly with him is a rich and serene endeavor to enact his essential manhood, to impress his latent and plenary divinity upon the solicitous world around him. He would be ashamed of the gifts of fortune, for he would feel himself belittled by them, did they assume to be anything more than the trappings and ornaments of his manhood. . For he feels that man is his own great fortune, and that life for him consists not in receiving good things, but in bringing forth from the depths of his ideal, from the radiant centre of divinity within him, a beauty so peerless, a benignity—a candor—a magnanimity so universal and unexampled, as to make nature's gifts spontaneous, and fill the attentive universe with applause."

Such is the true import of the phenomenon in man which we call "a conscience of sin." It attests an ideal realm in him which constitutes his true plane of being and incessantly strives to lift the actual plane into harmony with it. It attests the pure ideality of his origin or source of life, proves that his Creator is a purely ideal personality; because if He were sensibly distinct from the creature, that is to say if He were a sensible person, then the creature's perception of contrariety would involve no spiritual or inward anguish, but only sensible torment, only physical deformity and disease.

However, all this is by way of an illustration. I only wanted by this reference to man's religious struggles, to illustrate his grand distinctive trait, which is subjection to an ideal, or purely inward, object. What distinguishes him from all other existence, is, that he claims the power of ideal action, or that his end of action falls in every case within himself, within his proper subjectivity: while that of the lower existences falls without their subjectivity. The mineral is subject to the vegetable, the vegetable to the animal, and the animal to man. Man alone is subject to no external power, being subject only to an inward and infinite ideal. The animal has no ideal self, gives no token of an internal consciousness, acknowledges no object discretely interior or superior to its natural organization. You cannot divest man of his ideal. Plunge him into barbarism, make him work like a galley-slave for the miserable pittance of physical and social advantage he enjoys, steep his faculties in the mire of the actual and sensible to the very utmost: can you succeed at last in reducing him to the brute? By no means, for he will turn this beggarly actual itself into the profusest ideal, seeing the glance of Deity in every lightning-flash, hearing his terrible voice in every thunder-burst, acknowledging his goodness in the fruits of the earth, and in the early and later rains, and covering every hill and every val-

ley consequently, every wood and every river, with the tokens of his obsequious devotion. Natural religion, or the acknowledgment of God in nature, which is the definition of Paganism, although it fall very far short of Christianity, which is not a *cultus* but a life, being a recognition of God in man, still separates man *toto cœlo* from the brute.

RESPONSIBILITY.

I KNOW very well that the sectarian or literalist will repugn the explanation of responsibility, incidentally set forth in the preceding article. He regards man's conscience of sin, as importing a discordant relation between him and God, regarded not as the essential selfhood or inmost life of man, but as a distinctly external person, as a really sensuous existence capable of coming into bodily collision with him. He will have the relation of God to man, to be not the inviolably sweet and fostering relation of infinite to finite, of fountain to stream, of creator to creature, of object to subject, of ideal to actual; but the insufferably trivial and tyrannical relation of more finite to less finite, of big man to little man, of judge to criminal, of hangman to convict, of cat to mouse. "Away with your metaphysic niceties—he cries—between man and God. Away with all intellectual subtle-

ties in affairs of this pith and moment. When you talk of Deity, let Him be something the senses can take hold of. When you talk of the relation between Him and man, let it be the good wholesome relation of body to body, the sheer downright dealing of very brute with very brute. Such a relation is level to the senses, or rather to that measure of understanding which the senses furnish to man in common with all other animals: and it keeps sweet moreover the old traditions of hell-fire, and a damnation which is of inestimable value for ecclesiastical purposes."

The extreme puerility, and indeed virtual blasphemy of this position, is very easily exposed. For if God be a physical person, if He be finited from me in time and space, if there be such a relation between us as may give me sensible contact with Him, if in short He ever fall within the realm of my knowledge strictly so called, which is the realm of my sensible experience: then manifestly He cannot be my creator, He cannot give me being. For clearly he who gives me being, who imparts to me my selfhood, must fall within that self, and not without it. He must be inseparably and essentially one with it, and not antagonistic to it, because in this latter event my selfhood would either be destitute of being, would either not be, or else would prove its own creator: both of which results vitiate the premises. The

very meaning of selfhood, or personality, is subjection to an internal object, is subjection to an ideal end. Either therefore man is not a subject of God, which his creatureship necessitates: or else God is not a physical entity, is not an external person finited from him in space and time.

Man's true personality or selfhood transcends space and time, because in its last analysis it is infinite and eternal, being God. My phenomenal or apparent selfhood, that which makes *me* sensibly discernible from *thee* and *him*, is of course purely physical and moral, is my body and soul. But my true self, that which *unites* me with thee and him, exceeds these limits, and reduces my *physique* and *morale* to mere possessions. Neither my body nor my soul any longer constitutes myself. They are both alike ministers, vehicles, tabernacles, continents of myself, but are by no means consubstantiate with it. What my selfhood truly is I do not, nor ever shall, *know*. For being divine it does not fall within the scope of sense. I know very well for this reason, that it will be every day new, and full of an unexampled vigor. But to say what it *is*, is merely to describe its manifestation at some point of space and time, and so utterly omit its essential quality, its being.

If this be the case with my true selfhood, it follows of course that the Divine which constitutes it, and so withdraws it from space and time, cannot

Himself be subject to space and time. For this would be a contradiction. And if He be not subject to space and time, He can have no sensible contact with man; and consequently the position I have been examining falls to the ground.

I repeat therefore that man's "conscience of sin" implies the strict ideality of his being or creative source, the strict ideality of God.

Doubtless the doctrine of "conversion" current in the christian sects, may be alleged in opposition here. The technical *convert* may say: "I claim to have been converted by God out of a state of opposition to His will, into one of conformity; and it appears to me that the motives or machinery of this conversion, derived all their efficacy from the consideration, that God was a person capable of coming into sensible contact with me, and greatly influencing my susceptibilities of pleasure and pain. Do you feel inclined therefore to deny the reality of my conversion?"

I should be very sorry to deny a fact of my friend's consciousness, such for example, as any change of conduct which he may have undergone in obedience to the very powerful motives of pleasure and pain, which were brought to bear upon him during the process of his so-called conversion. Doubtless he is a visibly altered man, to some eyes for the better, to others for the worse. But it is clearly absurd to pronounce this visible alteration

the fruit of divine power in any special sense, in any other sense than that in which we call all events the work of divine power: because God by the very quality of his infinitude or perfection, is incapable of voluntary or specific action, that is to say is incapable of any desire, thought, or intention towards John Bunyan, Francis Xavier, and the "convert," which is not equally shared by Judas Iscariot, Pope Alexander VI., and Benedict Arnold. The former persons no doubt may claim a very different social regard from the latter, may claim to be much better men to the finite mind. But when we talk of the infinite mind, or of God's judgment, it is very clear to me that he who reckons least upon his differences from others, will be altogether the least disappointed.

MORALITY.

PERSONS of loose habits of thought, or persons habitually prone to take current opinions for granted, are apt to consider morality and manliness, duty and beauty, as convertible terms, and to regard our existing social obligations as identical with the obligations of justice.

But this pretension is true only of a perfect society, or a society scientifically organized. Scientifically viewed, duty and taste, duty and beauty, are indissolubly one, because science shows us that a true society or fellowship among men implies the complete reconciliation of its public and private interests. Of that perfect society it is indeed true to say, that it imposes no duty which the heart does not previously transmute into pleasure; or in other words, that its morality will mark, not as now the voluntary abasement of the private to the public element, but the loving unity

which shall make either resent the wound done to the other, as a wound done to itself. We have now indeed miniature instances of this perfect society or fellowship, in the annals of private and family friendship, instances where both parties being lifted by fortune and cultivated taste above the invasion of outward anxieties, find their mere legal or conventional obligations superseded by the offices of spontaneous respect and devotion.

But these are the exceptions to the rule. The rule or fact in relation to our present social *status* is undeniable, that an extreme inequality prevails between the public and private element, and that our morality measures accordingly not the reconciliation of these interests, but the degree in which one allows itself to be depressed by the other. In a true fellowship of men, in a society which really deserved its name, the highest morality of course would be to maintain the rigid and and undeviating harmony of these two elements. The public conscience in that case would disallow the slightest preponderance to either element, as an instant injury done the other. But our present social adjustment is so imperfect—the public and private interests of mankind are so poorly harmonized in our present society—that a man's morality is high in the exact ratio of his acquiescence in their disparity, in the exact ratio of his acquiescence in the exaltation of the public element over the private

one. What enhances my morality, and my consequent claim upon public esteem, is not my genial humanity, or the relations of undeviating justice I maintain in my intercourse with my neighbors; but my willingness to spend and be spent for the interests of society, my willingness to sustain its existing institutions at whatever damage to my private interests.

For morality contemplates man exclusively in his public aspect, or as he stands related to certain organized interests, to certain established institutions. It regards him altogether as the subject of a certain social organization, as under law to society, and pronounces him good or evil as he is favorably or unfavorably affected towards that position. Hence one's morality always covers his practical attitude towards the established or organized sentiment of his day and nation. It has nothing whatever to do with his private sentiments or personal sympathies. I may feel as I please and think as I please, but so long as I do not *do* as I please, my morality is unquestionable. Thus, as I said before, morality covers a man's relations to society, regards him as under law to society, as bound to postpone his own pleasure to its pleasure. It deposes him from his own sovereignty, from the control of his own actions, and exalts society into his place.

This is an extremely daring attitude for society

to assume with regard to man, and can engender only endless woes. For there is nothing in the destiny of man to justify it, nor consequently to make it long tolerable. The fact of man's divine origin or derivation ensures him a proportionate destiny, ensures him a destiny which shall render his outward life purely servile or ministerial to his inward one, and so make his social relations, or the relations he is under to his fellow, freely tributary to his divine ones, or the relations he is under to God. Such *must* be the destiny of man, unless we assert a disproportion between it and his source, which can only be done of course at the expense of the divine perfection. Society consequently is bound by the very destiny of man, to attempt no coercive or despotic influence over him, under penalty of infinite sorrows to itself. It is bound to exert a simply educative or fostering influence, such an influence as while it strenuously inhibits his subjection to nature, shall in no wise debase his aspiration, debase his ideal, below the fullest realization of Deity, or infinitude.

This has been the misfortune of society that it has not accurately *motived*, so to speak, man's elevation out of nature. It has given him this elevation indeed, as it was appointed to do, but it has placed the motive of it, not in the demands of his infinite destiny, but in the necessities of his social position. It has taught him to resist the despotism of nature,

but to what end? That he might thus come into the fellowship of God, into the realization of infinitude? Alas, no! but only that he might live and die a morally good man, and so secure the highest social benediction. This is a total infidelity on the part of society to its trust. Society was placed simply as a tutor or governor over man the heir of God, the heir of infinitude, in order to lift him while yet he was unconscious of his origin and destiny, out of the obedience of his merely natural appetites, and so gradually induct him into the recognition of an infinite ideal. But the tutor has grown plethoric and lazy. He has forgotten his original lieutenancy, and come to look upon himself as the *primum mobile* of human history, as the veritable end for which human discipline was first inaugurated. Thus society appeals to man by no higher motives than those of outward interest, or police, and contrives to keep him in what it calls order, meaning thereby subjection to itself, only by stifling or at least overlaying his profoundest instincts of Deity. Surely you would smile at the policeman who should fancy the burglar an offender against himself, and bestow a little private chastisement upon him, or who should expect the thief to abandon his gains out of the love he owed him, the policeman. And you would distrust the wisdom of the tutor who in educating the heir of a noble house, should habitually sink

both the antecedents of his pupil and the destiny they infer, and diligently instil no higher motive of action than the affection due himself.

Yet this is the exact blunder of society. Forgetting that it is simply a policeman, simply a tutor, designed to elevate man out of his natural impotence and ignorance, and smooth every outward obstacle to his plenary participation of God's perfection, it has ceased to minister the divine life to him, and exalted itself into an end of action. It was originally instituted to guard the destiny of man, to extricate him from the grasp and entanglement of brute nature, and so prepare him for the realization of a good which is infinite. It was never told to propose itself, to propose its own favor, as the end of the discipline it imposes. In other words, it was never told to make moral goodness, the goodness which flows from social conformity, the final good of man, but only a mediate or subordinate good. The final good of man, the good for which and by which he is created, is the realization of the divine life or perfection, which life or perfection consists in an infinite ability, or an ability unlimited by any thing external to the subject. And an infinite ability in man, such an ability as shall be unlimited by any thing external to him, is possible only in so far as a complete unity obtains between his *esse* and *existere*, between

his *being* and *form*, between his inward and outward life.

Society consequently is the instrument of this unity. It promotes the unity of man's inward and outward life, by enabling him to resist the despotism of the latter. For you all know that so long as one should recognize only sensual and finite good, only that good which stands in the gratification of his natural appetites, he would be utterly blind to infinite and spiritual good, that good which descends into the human mind from God, and inspires human action with a grace, with a dignity, with a beauty unknown to all lower life. In fact he would be a mere brute, *minus* the instinct which governs the brute, and keeps him sweet and quasi-orderly in his sphere. Society then, as I said, fits man for the recognition of this inward and infinite good, by enabling him to resist the domination of the outward or sensible sphere. The way it enables him to resist this domination, is by gradually supplying all his natural wants. It finds him in want of external blessing, destitute of the supply of his natural wants, and craving consequently above all things and before all things relief in that direction. Society ensures him such relief. Society, or the fellowship of his kind, enables him to overcome the poverty and inclemency of nature. What he could not do by himself, society enables him to do, namely, to achieve the

supply of all his natural wants, and so rise above his original brutality, by finding leisure for the culture of his understanding, the refinement of his manners, and the pursuits of science and art.

To be sure society does not do this for *all* men until it has become perfect, until a *complete* harmony of the public and private social elements has been effected by science. In its infancy or immaturity society effects this great boon only for *one* man perhaps, say a king; or one class of men, say an aristocracy. It lifts a king or a governing class out of penury, out of the dominion of nature, and indues them with heroic culture and the manners of the skies. But what our imperfect society does for the king or the governing class, the perfect society will do for all men. For the king does but represent, and is nothing in himself beyond any other man. His sacredness is not personal but functional. He represents the perfect man of the future, who shall reign over the whole earth, and to whom all the isles of the sea shall bring tribute. Both the king and the priest do but represent or typify this lordly man, the man of destiny, the true son of God: the priest on the internal or spiritual side, the king on the external or practical side—the one foretokening his immaculate goodness, the other his matchless and irresistible power. And the total disrepute into which both the sacerdotal and regal functions have now fallen, total at least

with respect to the great living interests of the world, only proves that the substance of these shadows is drawing near, and the shadows consequently losing their mystical sanctity.

Such is the sole function of society, to lift man out of the bondage of nature, that he may become freely subject to God. Its office is not to elevate him out of natural bondage into social bondage, but into the freedom of God, into a life which cannot be corrupted, which cannot be defiled, and which shall never pass away. Hence society should never have exalted itself into an end for man, should never have proposed to him the moral life, the life of conformity to its will, as the true end of his aspiration. It should have addressed him only thus: "I do not wish you to conform to my precepts as absolute or final, but only as mediatory or conditional. I am the minister of your great destiny, the minister of God to you, appointed to give you deliverance out of your natural impotence and destitution, and unless therefore you recognize this worth in me, and afford me your zealous support and allegiance, you will defeat the benign promise of your destiny, and sink into mere brutality. In dealing with you therefore on this basis, I shall indeed call you either *good* or *evil* as you conform to, or rebel against, my precepts; but at the same time I will have you understand that this designation has no validity beyond your relations

to me—beyond the social sphere—and by no means affects your private or essential worth, your worth as a creature of God. The instinct of self-preservation will of course bind me to prize the good man, the man who sustains all my institutions, much more highly than the evil man, or the man who practically denies them. But God forbid that I should thereupon say that the good man was more acceptable to Him also. His sight is perfect, and He doubtless sees that the distinction in question dates not from any essential diversity in men, but from my own immaturity. I, society, am as yet in my infancy, and my resources are therefore imperfect. I can help a few men out of their natural slough, and crown them with the radiance of Deity; but I shall not be able to do this for all men, until my sinews grow, and my strength becomes perfected. But inasmuch as I full surely intend to do this for all men, I bid them by their allegiance to themselves, by their allegiance to the great hope of humanity, to be patient with me, and do nothing to obstruct my path under penalty of my extreme displeasure. I well know that I shall not fail of my mission, I well know that a divine arm sustains me so long as I am working in it, and that all they who gainsay me will simply gainsay therefore their own interests. This consideration forbids me to suppose that the disobedience which I provoke from

my inability at once to satisfy the wants of all men, ever attracts the divine regard. Should it even do so, I am quite sure it would move his smile rather than his frown."

Had society been capable of this wisdom from the beginning, or rather had the rulers of society discerned it, history would have exhibited a comparatively tranquil page. But the rulers did not discern it, because they had no scientific perception of human destiny. Science had not as yet begun to reveal a perfect earthly destiny for man, a destiny which proceeding upon the utter subjection of nature to him, allies him in affection, in intellect, and in action with the infinitude of God. Hence society more readily identified itself with the interests of the past than of the future, viewed itself as bound rather to conserve its present acquisitions, than to achieve new ones. This was very unhappy, because the growth of this temper, by giving mere institutions the supremacy of man, was sure to bring the best life of mankind into direct conflict with them. When institutions pretend to control that life which God alone controls, then every one in whom life flows with any depth, feels himself bound to gainsay and deride them. Institutions have never been the source, but only the outgrowth of life. They have only been marks upon the shores of time, saying, "Thus high hitherto has the tide of human life risen." They

are not placed there to prevent any higher rise, but simply to indicate a past one. And if they obstinately insist upon keeping their place *in perpetuam,* they will be sure to be finally submerged and lost to memory. For man was not made for institutions however sacred, but institutions the most sacred were made for him, and must cheerfully abide his pleasure.

Lacking this wisdom then, for which lack clearly they are very unblamable, the rulers of society have always failed to conciliate the best men. Men of enlarged sympathies, men of an ardent humanitary zeal, have always refused to look upon any given institutions as final, or to regard human destiny as identified with the attainment of any literal goal. They have always perfectly obeyed the spirit of social law, that is to say, in all their intercouse with their fellows they have fulfilled the law of love, and done as they would be done by; but they have done this not at the beck of society, not with a view to win its justification or righteousness, but from a far deeper ground, namely, an intense perception of human unity, and an intense disgust therefore of every voluntary infraction of it. "Your law," they have virtually said, "binds us to do no injury to our neighbor. Now the literal obligation to refrain from injuring our neighbor, springs out of, derives all its force from, the spiritual obligation to love him. Do you not

therefore see at a glance that if we should take any pride in our literal obedience to your law, if we should value the righteousness contingent upon that obedience, and so allow ourselves to be exalted above others who do not obey it, we should instantly violate its spirit? How should our love to our neighbor consist with a disposition to seem a better man than he is, an *intrinsically* better man? We perfectly admit that we are much better members of present society than they are who violate your statutes. But at the same time we perceive that this superiority on our part measures not any intrinsic or essential disparity among men, but simply your own imperfection as a society, or the degree in which you have failed to organize fellowship or equality among your members. It is exclusively with you therefore that our quarrel lies, as we have no hope of seeing vice and crime disappear save through your enlargement."

A VERY LONG LETTER.

My Dear ———.

You find me affirming that the righteousness which befits the divine kingdom on earth—or what is the same thing, *perfect* righteousness—is not moral, that is to say, does not consist in any inward or essential superiority of one man to another. Extreme differences may exist to our eye among men, exalting one to heaven, and depressing another to hell; but the attributes of the former confer no *merit*, nor those of the latter any *demerit*, in the sight of God. You find me, moreover, claiming this as the exact scope and meaning of all Christ's words, and the consequent cause of all the ignominy and violence he endured from the leaders of the popular devotion. And inasmuch as my position and claim are somewhat novel, you express a solicitude to know why I wish to place the Christ in this attitude towards morality, and what

I expect to gain for humanity by proving him entitled to it.

No inquiry can be more reasonable. I am sure, and I have little doubt that I shall be able to give you a thoroughly satisfactory answer, provided no merely verbal misapprehension occurs to postpone a good understanding between us. In order to divest my letter of unnecessary dullness, and give our discussion as much as possible a human or living interest, let me throw what I have to say into an autobiographic form, and give you a chapter of my mental history. Of course, therefore, you will acquit me of any personal motive in this.

Doubtless the main reason of my discontent with the popular Christian theology, the theology of the pulpit, and the main reason therefore of my betaking myself to the gospels only for light, was the extreme mental suffering induced in me by that theology, or what is the same thing, the extreme violence done by it to my instincts of the Divine perfection. From my infancy I had been religious as to the bent and purpose of my mind, and although remarkable for nothing in character or conduct, I felt a peculiar activity of conscience ever scourging me into more and more timorous *personal* relation with Deity. I was not conscious of any heinous offences. I was full of health and spirits, convivial and prone to pleasure, and occa-

sionally no doubt, like every one else, capable of excesses, but with no consciousness of an injurious relation to any human being that I can remember. Indeed, the morbid susceptibility of my conscience —my extreme sensibility to public opinion— secured my general inoffensiveness, while it left me a prey to the most poignant sorrows for mistakes and accidents so trivial that I am ashamed to mention them.

To soothe this conscience, and fulfil moreover what I deemed a sacred obligation on every man, I joined the church. I believed the theology of the church quite as fully before this event as afterwards; but I felt insecure of the right to appropriate the Christian hope until I had made a formal profession of faith. My conscience of sin was now perfectly pacified. I had found a refuge against every muttering of vindictive wrath. So far good. But after all I felt uneasy. The church had delivered me from a conscience of sin, but had given me no consciousness of righteousness in its place. The house of my soul had been swept of its evils, but it still remained desolate of goods. I could accuse myself of no lukewarmness in the exercises of piety, and yet was miserably unhappy a large portion of my time. Rather let me say unblessed, for what I wanted was an indefinable inward or upward repose, whose absence did not actually destroy my happiness in outlying things, but whose

presence seemed somehow necessary to authenticate it.

The entire influence of the pulpit went to the intensifying of this condition. Every sermon I heard aggravated my inward remoteness from God, my sense of utter disproportion between Him and me. Neither my clergyman nor my devout acquaintance appeared to understand my trouble. My bosom harbored no secret guilt, nor did my actions betray any overt iniquity. It was not a conscience of sin in any respect which burdened me, but a simple unconsciousness of righteousness. I had found perfect repose from a guilty conscience in the doctrine of Christ. But I had found no assurance of God's personal love or complacency in me. I was studiously, even superstitiously pure in thought and act. I cherished no emotions but those of complete benignity towards my kind. I spoke no evil of any man, much less devised any. I gave freely of my goods to the poor; contributed profusely to missionary and similar enterprises; read every famous book, and diligently observed every precept of mystical and ordinary piety. I vowed my life to the service of the gospel, and placed myself in the chief seminary of my sect with a view to the ministry. I abounded in prayer, day and night. I sought the aid of eminent Christians in both hemispheres, and obeyed their counsels. In short, touching the righteousness which

was in the law of my sect and nation, I was utterly blameless. And yet for all this my soul was destitute of peace, and while my lips were familiar with the traditional formulas of Christian praise and jubilee, I yet in all my practice cherished the spirit and exhibited the manners of an abject slave.

It would be tedious to report the gradual dawn of the truth upon my understanding. Reading one day the Epistle to the Romans, my attention became arrested by the words, read before a thousand times without notice—*Faith cometh by hearing.* I said to myself, Faith then means belief of the truth, and not any magical operation in the bosom. Do I not believe the truth? I have taken it for granted that I do all along; but perhaps I am unacquainted with some of its profounder features. So I betook myself to a new reading of the Gospels, and of the older Scriptures, as bearing upon the advent of a Christ, and I soon perceived that I had not been just to the truth. I had divorced the Christ from that historical position which gives him all his meaning, and tacitly attributed to him a purely arbitrary supremacy. Looking at him now as related to a certain exclusive hope on the part of the Jew towards God, his character began to assume an unparalleled majesty, and to reveal a depth of humanitary perfection in God who sent him, such as I had never conceived until then.

Before this I had been wont to regard the Christ as an *absolute* person, so to speak, or as one whose extraordinary virtue was a matter of course, flowing from some special liberality of Divinty to him, and dispensing us therefore from any rational homage. In short, I practically esteemed his dominion as reflecting some passive relation he was under to Deity, rather than as wrought out and won by simple obedience to the spirit of universal love, the spirit of humanity, the spirit of God. Now my view was completely changed. I saw clearly now why it behooved the Christ to die—why the Divine glory absolutely forbade him to live. For the living or personal Christ belonged to the Jew alone. To the Jew all the promises belonged in the letter. And if, therefore, the Christ intended to erect a fleshly kingdom to God upon the earth, the Jew alone was entitled to its admission. But to the mind of Jesus God was spiritual—was the Father of the Gentile as well as the Jew—and hence it would be flat treason in him to recognize the Jewish pretension. In short, unless he impeached out and out the letter of their Scripture, in which case, of course, he would vacate his own claim to the Messiahship, he was bound either rigidly to fulfil it, or else manfully die in testimony of its having a larger or spiritual and universal import. Thus his very death became the irrefutable evidence of his truth, and the Divine

glory, as identified with the welfare of universal man, gathered its best lustre even from the extremity of his sufferings.

Looking at my past history as illumined by this new and glorious revelation of the Divine character, I began to perceive that I had been wrong hitherto in craving a *personal* righteousness, or in desiring to be distinguished by God's personal favor to me. I perceived that this was only a Christian form of the Jewish error, and that the only righteousness, the only experience of inward amity with God, which I could ever attain to, must lie simply in my participation of the spirit of God, that spirit of humanitary or universal love which had animated all the actions of Christ. What I had all along been groaning for was a righteousness in myself, was an assured conviction that God had some esteem for me, Henry James, that he knew my features, recognized me when I knelt down to pray, and said to himself in effect, "There is a person whose interests I shall certainly look after, while that unscrupulous John Smith, and that prayerless Tom Jones may go to purgatory, or further." I now perceived that God could not possibly sustain any such personal relation to me as this. Being a spirit of universal love, He of course could become related to me only in so far as I imbibed this spirit, only in so far as I dropped all personal pretension or hope—such hope or preten-

sion as stood in my moral differences from other men—and consented to identify myself with the great interests of humanity. God had no *passive* relations to man. Being a purely active or living force, being a spirit of living love, of course no one could come into anything but *active* relation with Him, a relation which utterly ignored the natural personality of the subject, and pertained wholly to the spirit of his mind. Hence I perceived that all my solicitude for a personal or passive nearness to God, a nearness superior to that of the publican and sinner, had in fact involved a complete insensibility to the Divine perfection—had argued a complete oversight of his spiritual character, or of his essential love to all mankind; and that to urge it any longer would be the most flagrant affront I could possibly offer to the gospel.

And I now discerned very clearly how utterly fatal the sensuous idea of God, which regards Him not as a spirit, but as an external person, finited in space and time, must ever be to that inward repose, to that conscience of perfect unity with Him, which I had so long and so vainly solicited. For in measure as this external person grew and towered in all perfection to my imagination, must I myself decline to all imperfection. Should I throughout eternity, therefore, feel a growing adoration of the Divine fullness, it was clear that this adoration must be dogged step by step by a grow-

ing sense of my own emptiness, of my own destitution. This result was totally undeniable to reason. According to the sensuous theory of the Divine existence, the very perfection of the Creator became demonstrable only through the imperfection of his creature, and that relation which in all rational estimation should have secured the happiness of the latter, became the bond of his endless and unspeakable misery. Could it then really be a divine end in creation to ordain such a relation between Himself and his creature? Could the great God take satisfaction in seeing Himself perpetually aggrandized at the expense of his own offspring? Did the splendor of creation attest no higher disposition in the Creator than this, namely, to display his own endless perfection by means of the endless imperfection of another, and that other his own absolute progeny? Which were the worthier thought of God, to conceive of Him displaying his essential perfection through the *elevation* of his creature, or through his *debasement?* It seemed to me that the latter conception, which logically inheres in the sensuous theory of creation, was incredible and diabolic, turning creation upside down, and making God infinitely less estimable than man. Thus I learned, through this doctrine of a crucified Christ, and a consequent spiritual kingdom of God, to discard the sensuous notion of Deity, the notion of his being an external, and

therefore finite person. For I saw plainly that if such were the real relation between man and God, it must prove, in the exact ratio of the former's sincere adoration and homage, one of incessant and immitigable torture to him.

Your questions have now all been virtually answered. You now perceive that my desire to revive the original gospel, grows out of my estimation of its stupendous humanitary bearings. The ecclesiastical gospel is utterly destitute of any humane or scientific worth. It deals with private interests exclusively, and turns the universal Father into a mere respecter of persons, subject to all the caprices and jealousies of a petty earthly despot. What I expect to gain for humanity, accordingly, by exhibiting the right relation of Jesus towards morality, towards the finite righteousness of man, is the egress of all those false and frivolous personal distinctions which are the curse of our present society, and the consequent ingress of that divine righteousness which consists only with the spirit of mutual love, the spirit of universal human brotherhood. The gospel of Jesus stamps a zeal for humanity as the true divine spirit in man. The false gospel makes that spirit to consist in a zeal for certain institutions, no matter how oppressive these may be to the general life of man, and thus practically sacrifices man to his circumstances.

But here you ask me whether I do not make God indifferent to moral distinctions?

I reply that He is indifferent to them as *ends*, but not as *means*. In other words, I hold the moral experience of man to be purely *incidental* to the evolution of his great destiny. It holds an incidental or mediatory place in his history, not an essential or final one. Many a trowel of many a mason was incidental to the erection of St. Peter's at Rome, and many a sand-heap again incidental to the efficiency of those trowels. But I presume no one who looks upon the completed edifice ever recurs to these forgotten incidents of its progress, or deems them in any manner essential to it. It is precisely such a relation as this which morality sustains to human destiny, or the perfect life. But as the truth upon this subject is of vast importance in every point of view, speculative and practical, let me make myself clearly understood.

I assume then, at the start, the perfection or infinitude of the Creator; to which of course you will not object. Now perfection or infinitude, when applied to a rational subject, means his ability to do whatsoever his affections and his judgment prompt; it means, in short, the subject's self-sufficiency. Whoso does whatsoever his affections and his judgment appoint, neither more nor less, is an infinite or perfect being. The human mind at least can conceive of no perfection beyond this. It is

a self-poised or self-contained life, wholly underived *ab extra*.

But if the Creator claim this perfection, this self-sufficiency, this underived being, it of course follows that His creature must exhibit a like perfection. I say "of course," because any other inference would contradict the premises. An imperfect creature cannot come from a perfect creator, because, inasmuch as he would fail to represent a portion of the creative perfection, the inference would be that the creative perfection had been to that extent inoperative, which would be tantamount to saying that the creature was not the work of a perfect creator, and hence would, as I have said, contradict the premises. We may therefore take it for granted, that whenever we discern imperfect existence, existence which is insufficient to itself, or conditional, we do not discern the true creation of God. What we discern may indeed be involved in such creation, may be incidental to its full evolution, but can by no means constitute it.

Now, incontrovertibly, moral existence rests under this imputation of imperfection. It is a strictly conditional existence, and therefore finite or imperfect. It is conditioned upon an immature society or fellowship among men. Take away unequal or discordant relations among men, and you take away the only basis of morality. For morality

always proceeds upon a conflict of interests between its subjects, upon the sharpest possible opposition of *meum* and *tuum*. No man is pronounced morally good save in so far as he observes this opposition, nor morally evil save in in so far as he denies it. If the interests of my fellow-man be identical with my own, then you do not hold me entitled to praise for acting in accordance with them, nor to censure for acting otherwise. In the former case you would say that I had no choice in the premises; in the latter case, you would merely pronounce me stupid or idiotic. Thus, in making my interests harmonic with those of my fellow-man, you make my conduct purely spontaneous or involuntary, and hence divest it of moral attributes. Choice is essential to moral action. When you punish a man for stealing his neighbor's property, or praise him for resisting the temptation to do so, you suppose him cognizant of the opposition between *meum* and *tuum*, and either voluntarily disobedient or voluntarily obedient thereto, as the case may be. Had the man been unaware of any opposition, and therefore exerted no choice, you would attribute neither praise nor blame to him.

Thus you perceive that morality is conditioned upon an immature or imperfect fellowship among men, such a fellowship as organizes the greatest possible discord of interests between man and

man. Accordingly the more you improve human society, or harmonize human interests, the more you exhaust the moral life, or destroy the sole ground of moral distinctions. A perfect society or fellowship among men would utterly destroy morality; for where no divided interests exist between men, but the interest of each is that of all, of course no possible occasion can arise for their discrimination into good and evil. No man ever antagonizes his neighbor's interest, save with a view to promote his own; and if therefore you release men from this temptation by removing their existing social inequalities, you utterly vacate every shade of moral diversity among them. Every variety of kindly and sympathetic feeling will of course still remain; for the passional nature of man, love, friendship, paternity, ambition, has yet, as I conceive, to realize its sabbath upon earth, and array human society in a glory still unimagined. But while all the sympathetic attributes of humanity will be glorified by a perfect society, the advent of such a society will utterly destroy the moral differences of mankind, all those differences based upon their obedience or disobedience to certain outward or conventional institutions.

Now I cannot for a moment allow that the divine life is so pure a sham as to depend for its existence upon the existence of hostile relations between its subjects. On the contrary, I insist

totis viribus that that life will never be realized, save in so far as its subjects are in perfectly harmonic relation, or until the welfare of each be made the welfare of all. No one who gives the slightest thought to this subject can fail to agree with me here. For the word God symbolizes all perfection to our ears, and as we have no idea of any perfection which is not human, so it symbolizes all human perfection. But what sort of humaneness, what sort of humanity, would that be which asserted itself only through the degradation of another? It is evident that Deity would be impossible on any such terms; the conception instantly merges in that of diabolism. I will not insult your understanding by arguing the matter. It suffices merely to restate my proposition, which is, that inasmuch as moral distinctions, the distinctions of good and evil, exist only where hostile or divided interests exist among men, so of necessity the divine life which exacts a perfect unity of interests among its subjects, will at its coming utterly obliterate moral distinctions from the face of the earth. In other words, the perfect life is not moral, because it involves a harmony so complete among men as to be fatal to the existing differences of good and evil.

Unquestionably, then, morality is merely incidental to human destiny. It is not God's *end* in humanity, but only a *means* to that end. Let me

now show you in few words what I mean by the latter proposition.

The divine end in creation is the perfection of the creature. He would have the creature perfect with His own perfection, otherwise of course He would fall short of an earthly parent's excellence. But God's perfection lies in Himself, and not in any outward relations He is under. It is an inward perfection, manifested therefore not in compulsory or dutiful forms, but only in spontaneous ones. Hence man in order to be perfect as God is perfect, must realize a spontaneous life, must come to find his life within himself, and not without. This is the life of God in man.

Now in order to man's realizing this divine or perfect life, which, being one, knows no conflict, it is requisite before all things that his external relations be strictly consonant with justice. It is requisite that there be no organized inequality of man with man. Because, where the life is one, it behooves all its subjects, in order to receive it, to place themselves in unitary relations with each other, in relations of mutual accord.

Now conscience, the moral sentiment, the sentiment of justice, the knowledge of good and evil, or whatsoever other name you please to bestow upon it, is merely the assertion of this necessity, or of the equality of man with man in the Divine sight. It is the forerunner or harbinger of the

perfect man, preparing a high road for his feet by levelling every mountain and exalting every valley which are naturally inapposite to such a use. Its function is not, by any means, to confer life, but simply to witness and announce a life whose on-coming awaits only the removal of our existing social inequalities, or the destruction of arbitrary privilege, in order to lift the whole race of man into the plenary fellowship of the Divine perfection. Its function is thus exclusively limitary, corrective, mediatory. It says in every form of utterance, Let no man exalt himself above his brother, because the Divine end in humanity, the divine life in man, consists only with relations of perfect unity among men. But it does *not* say, that the man who obeys this injunction merits the Divine favor, nor does it say that the man who disobeys it merits the Divine frown. It says nothing whatever on this subject. It is exclusively a testimony to the final, or divine-natural man, the true son of God, the heir of all worlds, by whom, and to whom, and for whom are all things; and it rigidly confines itself therefore to a prescription of the sentiments and manners which befit his kingdom. *He* is good—not absolutely, or in the Divine estimation, but with reference to the interests of the coming divine-man, with reference to the Lord's kingdom on earth—who observes just relations with his brother, or does unto others as he

would have others do unto him. *He* is evil—not absolutely, or in God's estimation, but with reference to the approaching divine humanity, and the interests of its empire—who violates just relations with his kind, or serves himself at another's expense. Thus the purpose or function of the law is entirely ministerial to the ultimate revelation of God in human nature. Accordingly, you observe that when the Christ, or representative divine man, came, he claimed that the law was simply a shadow or type of his effulgence, and therefore bound to disappear when the substance had come; and his apostles after him everywhere announced the passing away of the legal dispensation, which had received its ample *quietus* both in spirit and letter from his life and death of unparalleled devotion to humanity.

I know very well that the Christian church had no sooner become somewhat prosperous in the earth, and attracted the coquetry of the secular powers, than it rapidly unlearned the spirit of Christ, and practically gave out that his kingdom was strictly of this world, recognizing the principle of an essential and everlasting antagonism among mankind, the antagonism of good and evil, high and low, rich and poor, wise and ignorant. Its own sacraments of baptism and the eucharist—the former affirming the equal past uncleanness, the latter the equal present sanctity, of all its subjects

—were indeed a standing witness of, and a standing protest against, the church's corruption. But these rites have not *yet* risen, save among a very few minds in the church, into their spiritual or humanitary significance, and remain, for the most part, empty superstitions.

Had the Church then preserved its essential aloofness to the merely secular State of man, by preserving its fidelity to the Christian idea, the idea of humanity, we should not only have missed those ferocious religious wars which have branded Christendom with ineffaceable shame, but we should have had no reorganization of the legal economy, nor any of that obscene apparatus of vindictive justice, dungeon, rack, and gallows, which still defiles the earth. For in that case the church, by endowing man with an inward and divine selfhood or *proprium*, which manifests itself only in every form of inspired and beautiful action, would have weaned him from any undue estimation of that merely natural and secular *proprium* which asserts itself only by penal statutes. The natural selfhood of man, to the definition and vindication of which the moral law is wholly confined, is not his true or divinely-given selfhood. It is merely the matrix, or mould, into which that true selfhood is to run and become manifested. If, therefore, we obstinately persist in viewing the former as final, and so shut out all recognition of that to which it is

subsidiary, we shall act as the fool, or the uninstructed child, who cares only for the shows of things, and is indifferent to their substance.

You now perceive what I mean by saying that morality is only a *means* to the divine end in creation. It is not the perfect life, but its indispensable harbinger. The perfect life becomes realized only in so far as our external man becomes subject to the internal one, or what is the same thing, only in so far as we acknowledge the exclusively inward or spiritual being of God, and so become emancipated from all outward allegiance. In the infancy of the race, of course, this life is impossible, because nature at that period yields so stinted an obedience to man's bodily appetites as to give them a wholly inordinate development, and reduce him in fact to their abject vassalage. The uproar of the senses demanding sustenance (symbolized in the early records of human Genesis by the *serpent*) deafens him to the divine voice within, and compels that voice to assume an outward form, a form adapted to the sensuous mind, and address him only in tones of prohibition and rebuke. Thus man's moral experience, or his subjection to outward law, signalizes the immaturity of his destiny or true life, and is mercifully guarding its interests even while the subject himself is utterly unconscious of it.

A true society or fellowship among men, then,

would in my opinion do away with our present moral differences, because these differences depend altogether upon an imperfect social organization. But as you, who are not very familiar with speculation in this direction, may infer that a state of society void of moral differences must necessarily be a disorderly state, let me anticipate that inference. Let me indeed aim to prove to you that a state of society, devoid of moral differences, or what is the same thing, which places man in harmony with his nature, must of necessity be perfectly orderly, must in fact be of itself the very consummation of law and prophecy.

What is the ground of your inference just cited? On what ground do you infer that a state of society devoid of moral distinctions, must necessarily be a disorderly state? It is on the ground of a very prevalent misconception of the true nature or constitution of morality. To persons of inaccurate habits of thought morality implies a warfare between man and his appetites and passions. It is thought to involve an enforced subjection of these appetites and passions, so that he who exercises this subjection is deemed a morally good man, and he who does not exercise it, but allows his nature to have way, is deemed a morally evil man. Thus it popularly implies an essential antagonism between man on the one side, and his appetites and passions on the other. Such being the current

conception of morality, it of course stamps a social state which places man in harmony with the appetites and passions of his nature, as in the highest degree disorderly. As moral evil, according to this definition of morality, consists in giving the natural appetites and passions free gratification, so of course a state of society which authenticates such freedom must be, in the intensest measure, morally evil, and that only.

Thus every thing here depends upon the truth of a definition. If the popular definition of morality, as a condition of warfare between man and his nature, be correct; if it proceed upon a sufficient induction of particulars; then I at once admit all that any one can claim, and pronounce the social condition to which under the guidance of Democracy we are rapidly tending, as helplessly evil. But the definition in question is incorrect, or does not involve a sufficient induction of facts, and I therefore utterly reject, all and sundry, the inferences which may be based upon it.

Who shall decide between us? Where shall we find a definition of morality ratified by the universal mind of man? I know of none so commanding as that given by Jesus Christ, when he declared that it consisted in our doing as we would be done by. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS." I am not

aware that this definition has ever encountered any opposition. In fact, it has so commended itself to the universal heart of man, that it is popularly named the "golden rule," or the rule whose worth transcends all others. Of course, then, you will gladly ratify this definition of morality. No one who respects the name of Christ will fall behind the rest of the world in appreciating his golden precept.

Morality means, then, by the consent of all intelligent minds, the doing as we would be done by, or a relation of strict equality between man and man. He who does to others as he would have others do to him, is a morally good or just man. He who does to others what he would not have them do to him; or he who does not do to others what he would have them do to him; is a morally evil or unjust man. Beyond this, according to the mind of Jesus Christ, ratified by all intelligent minds since, morality does not go. It is the affirmation of a perfect equality between man and man. It says not a word of a man's relations to his own body; but only of his relations to his neighbor. It does not say, "It is good to restrain your natural appetites and passions; it is evil to indulge them." It says, "Whoso cultivates equal or just relations with his neighbor, is good. Whoso cultivates unequal or unjust ones, is evil." Such is the sum of morality according to Jesus

Christ. "Do as you would be done by:" not a word more or less. Whoso obeys this law fulfils all moral obligation. Of course the rule implies a restraint of the appetites and passions, whenever they prompt any injustice to the neighbor, just as it implies also disobedience to one's parents, or to one's gods even, should they prescribe injustice. But not otherwise. In so far as one's appetites and affections involve no detriment to one's neighbor, morality says nothing, leaving them to the regulation of good taste, education, public sentiment, and so forth. A man of diseased appetites, the drunkard, for example, may present a disgusting spectacle to others, and be actually incapacitated by his habits for the fulfilment of his moral obligations. But you do not call the drunkard so much an evil man as an unfortunate one, nor deem his conduct half so injurious to others as it is to himself. Vice is in every case a violation of one's self-respect, of the respect he owes to his own nature, and claims therefore the meed of compassion. Crime, or the breach of morality, is in every case a violation of the respect we owe to others, and is sure therefore to provoke indignant reprehension. The vicious man invites our sorrow, for he is the victim of habits against which his will is powerless. The criminal provokes our anger, for he deliberately does to another what he would not have another do to him. The one violates only

the unity of nature. The other violates the more intimate unity of humanity.

The meaning of morality then is indisputable. Accordingly how does it bear upon the point we are discussing? Who is right, my antagonist or myself—he who supposes morality to imply a perpetual warfare between man and his nature—or he who supposes it to imply no such thing, but only relations of exact equality between man and man? I will not insult your understanding by pressing the question. You perceive at a glance that if we take the Christian idea of morality (Christ's idea) for granted, then a man may obey every appetite and passion of his nature to the fullest possible extent within the limits of an equal regard to other men, and yet be morally approved. And if so, then it follows that a state of society may exist without the slightest prejudice to morality, in which, notwithstanding, each and all the members, or the public and private interests, may be so harmoniously related as to allow the utmost possible reedom to all the appetites and passions of human nature. Which was the proposition to be demonstrated.

But I do not stop here. I am not content with merely saying that a state of society which puts man in harmony with his nature, or, in equivalent terms, insures him the ample gratification of all his appetites and passions, may exist without

prejudice to the interests of morality. I claim that such a state of society is absolutely *indispensable* to those interests. I insist that such a state of society is the actual fulfilment of all morality—is the destined consummation of all law and prophecy—is in fact the necessary basis of God's kingdom on earth. Before attempting to prove this proposition, let me obviate a probable misconception of my meaning springing from the popular misuse of the word *passions*.

I use this word altogether in its scientific strictness, or as denoting certain springs or principles of action in man, certain original susceptibilities or aptitudes of human nature, bearing the names of Love, Friendship, Paternity, Ambition. These passions of man, when exempt from arbitrary compression, or left to their free development, work the most peaceful and benignant results. They are the sources or springs of all our activity, and in the exact measure of their fullness or intensity they clothe human life with beauty. They are the first fountains of the ideal within us, forever renovating the arid sands of our daily life with verdure and freshness. But these passions, when circumstances are unpropitious, especially when they are arbitrarily thwarted, assume oftentimes a morbid expression inversely proportionate to the benignity of their normal action. Their very fullness or intensity, which constitutes their value, renders them

liable to the profoundest wounds, and the anguish of these wounds often drives the subject into fearful reaction. Love, for example, is habitually betrayed to disappointment by our present unscientific social arrangements, and the subject consequently is incessantly driven to revenge or other disorderly manifestation. And so with all our passions. They are all alike capable of being stung, *by the tyranny of outward circumstances,* into the most subversive action. Now thoughtless people are wont to fix upon these morbid displays of the passion as characteristic of it, and exalt the purely accidental into the essential. Thus you hear people talk of the passions of anger, revenge, avarice, etc., as if these exceptional states were the rule, or as if passion could ever truly reveal itself save in freedom from outward domination. But who would go to a hospital to ascertain the laws of health? Or who would visit a prison to study the unfettered and spontaneous play of the human body? The very word—*enormities*—by which men characterize these angry and revengeful displays, proves them to be unnatural. They are nature's *excesses,* where she is seen going out of herself to obey some foreign influence. There can be no obscurity, then, upon my use of the word *passions.* I discard the vulgar use of it utterly, and confine it to its strict scientific sense, as indicating the divinely implanted springs of action in human

nature. Thus when I speak of a state of society which will place man in harmony with his passions, I mean one which will place no arbitrary limitations—no limitations underived from the passions themselves—upon the passions or sentiments of Love, Friendship, Ambition, or Paternity. So that my whole proposition runs thus: A state of society which will perfectly gratify every appetite of man's body, and every want of his soul comprehended under the terms Love, Friendship, Ambition, Paternity, affords the destined and only possible fulfilment of all morality, affords indeed the indispensable basis of God's kingdom on earth. The proof of this proposition stands in the fact, that such a state of society alone meets the requirements of a perfect equality among men. But let us proceed step by step.

It is very well known that the law and the prophets mentioned by Christ in his famous definition of morality, testified of a divine kingdom or righteousness to be manifested in the fullness of time upon the earth. Now, as Christ declared the fulfilment of all this law and prophecy to consist in our doing as we would be done by, that is to say, in social equality, so it seems inevitable to conclude that social equality is the fundamental principle of the divine administration or economy on earth. Of course it would affront the position of Jesus as a Christ, or divine messenger, to regard

his words as having primarily any private application. He was the voice of God to universal man, and when he expounds God's law, therefore, any private application of his words must be derived from their public or universal import. In short, his exposition of the law is spiritual, and therefore universal or infinite. Thus, when he says the law and the prophets mean neither more nor less than this, Do as ye would be done by, he virtually says that such is the will of God with respect to all men, such the necessary basis of His cordial intercourse with them. He would have all men do unto others as they would have others do unto them; which is equivalent to saying that he would have the perfect equality of man with man recognized. For manifestly without this equality the rule could not be binding. The only ground upon which I can be asked to do to others precisely as I would have them do to me is, that in the eyes of Him who asks it, we are precisely equal. If I were unequal with them either by excess or defect, the inequality of our relation would beget or even impose a corresponding inequality of obligation.

Social equality, then, according, to the words of Jesus Christ, is the fulfilment of all morality, of all law and promise on the part of God towards men. The world waits for nothing more than the *organization* of this equality by society, to begin its endless rest. The equality of man with man *must* be

organized by society before it can be even recognized by the individual. Accordingly, society has done nothing from the beginning but attempt to organize this equality. All its statutes and ordinances have been so many approximations to it. But it can never attain to its ideal or perfect state, until it perfectly organizes it. And it can only perfectly organize it by allowing to every one the free enjoyment of his natural appetites and passions. Let me make this clear.

Society has no power over the nature of man. All the wit of human society cannot add one cubit to my natural stature, nor make one of my hairs white or black. But now as every man differs from every other in natural endowments, as one is bold and another timid, one strong, another feeble, one simple, another shrewd, and so forth, how shall society hope to ordain any equality among them? Manifestly not by any Procrustean legislation addressed to the violent modification of these differences, for nature abhors constraint save with a view to ampler future enjoyment. How otherwise? Manifestly only by determining to honor all men equally, that is, by refusing to allow one man any *arbitrary* advantage over another. By arbitrary advantage I mean, an advantage underived from one's own genius. A musician, for example, or a sculptor, will always have a warm appreciation among certain portions of the community, and a

mathematician or machinist among other certain portions. Now society wisely leaves any advantage which one of these men enjoys in any quarter over another to the procurement of his own genius; feeling well assured that such advantage will be amply compensated in another quarter by the genius of the other. But if society should say, on the contrary, that the musician should have a fuller meal every day than the mathematician, or the sculptor enjoy superior social culture to the machinist, every one would feel the discrimination to be arbitrary, and pronounce society so far vicious or imperfect. Why? Because we instinctively feel that society has no right to guarantee one man's nature ampler satisfactions than another's; that natural want is in every case the ample title to, and the only measure of, natural gratification; and that society's prime function therefore is, not to ordain inequalities in this regard, but utterly to destroy them as fast as they come to her notice. The diversity of human gifts has been ordaining these inequalities all along the course of history, or giving one man superior natural endowments to another. But society's business is not to legislate for one or few, but for all. She should therefore aim to reduce these inequalities wherever they have risen, and insure to all the same material succor, the same exemption from outward want, which has been realized hitherto only by the few. The

province of society lies wholly in providing for man's material development, in removing from that sphere every thing like organized injustice or inequality. The development of his genius, and the care of his spiritual interests belong appropriately to God, who I doubt not would be found amply competent to the task, whenever society should consent to inaugurate Him.

Thus the only way in which society can ordain equality among men, is by freeing human want of every sort from the organized or conventional disabilities which now exist to its gratification. Here alone society can operate a perfect equality, by saying that every man's nature, whatever be his personal differences from other men, shall be alike honored. And in operating a perfect equality among its subjects, it fulfils, according to the golden precept of Jesus Christ, all morality. But if so, then it follows that a society or fellowship among men which places man in exact harmony with his natural appetites and passions, affords the only possible fulfilment of all law and prophecy, the destined basis of God's kingdom on earth. Which was the other proposition to be demonstrated.

Here I close this very long letter, promising never again to indite a similar one, and remain as ever your obedient servant.

"SPIRITUAL RAPPINGS."

I UNDERSTAND that these rappings are on the increase in this city, and are devoutly attended by scores of persons soliciting intelligence of their trans-sepulchral friends and cronies. The effect of the exhibitions will perhaps finally be to diminish the prevalent superstitious awe of death, and beget common-sense views of the life to which it is incidental. But I cannot help thinking that supernatural communications, real or imaginary, must almost necessarily prove injurious to the understanding which receives them.

I dread them chiefly on the ground of the authoritativeness they bear to the imagination. When a man gets a communication from the supernatural sphere, especially if he has been educated religiously, he is disposed to give it a more unquestioning credence than he would give to the same communication coming from a person in the flesh.

The novelty of the circumstance, the grim mystery which overlies all that interior sphere, the presumed superiority of the information which spirits possess, are so many provocatives to an abject and superstitious reverence on our part for whatever may befall us from that quarter; and hence there is great danger of losing our wits. I have never yet heard of any one's wits being improved by intercourse with departed spirits. I *have* heard of numerous instances in which they have been irreparably shattered.

It may be said that all our current ghosts are amiable, and exhibit no malignant purposes toward the intellect. So be it. But every one who has read Swedenborg with attention, a cool, dispassionate, scientific observer, knows very well that ghosts are up to any kind and degree of "artful dodge" which suits their final purpose. They read the memory of a person like a book, Swedenborg says, and he instances cases where they get hold of a criminal remembrance on the part of the subject, and keep urging it home upon him until they drive him almost frantic with remorse. The records of the old saintship are full of the fruits of this spiritual deviltry. All those phenomena of a morbid conscience which we see in "revivals," and which are called "conviction of sin," "concern for the soul's salvation," &c., grow out of this infernal tampering of ghosts with one's memory. Now I

by no means wish to say that every ghost who seeks to communicate with men in the flesh is roguish. But I do say, that supposing such an one *to be* roguish, he is quite capable, from his clairvoyant power, or his power of reading our memories, to assume for any length of time precisely such a guise as may best win our confidence, and confirm his final despotic grip.

No, I say to all this back-door influence—"Hands off, gentlemen! You may be very proper persons, but I insist upon seeing my company. You have uttered a great many elevated sentiments, no doubt; but sentiment is cheap on this side of Jordan, where we chiefly value deeds. Now if you will only *do* something for us, something which science will adopt into her repertory, we shall welcome you with all our hearts. If you are nearer, as some of you have said, to the sources of power, and know its secrets, and if, moreover, you wish to do us good as you all affirm, the way is open to you at once. Give us an invention like the electric telegraph, or the spinning-jenny. Give us a solution to some of the great questions of the day—the questions of finance, of an increased agricultural production, of the abolition of poverty and crime. Give us an improved medication, say a cure for small-pox, scarlet fever, gout, or even tooth-ache. Do any of these beneficent deeds for us, and then you shall

talk sentiment to us, and give us your opinions about cosmogony and 'the classification of spheres,' *ad libitum*. Until you consent to this proof of your benevolence, a proof so completely appreciable to us, and therefore so incumbent on you if you would *fairly* win our regard, be off—tramp—keep moving!"

For my own part, I suspect that our defunct brethren are by no means so well posted up in useful knowledge as we ourselves are. I suspect *The Tribune* is, on the whole, a superior newspaper to any that our late friend, "Mr. C." finds on his breakfast-table of a morning. I say *news*-paper deliberately, because, as Swedenborg proves very conclusively, the *natural* sphere is properly the only sphere of new things, being the true sphere of the Divine *power*. The interior spheres of creation, the spheres of affection and intellect, are doubtless very interesting and impressive; but the external sphere, the sphere of Nature, alone unfolds the wonders of creative *power*. We must therefore not allow these departed gentlemen to dishearten us. I have no doubt they experience the most refined emotions, and perceive truths in their own beautiful light. In a word, I have no doubt that their *passive* existence much transcends ours; but as to the *active*, I have as little doubt that we are equally in advance of them. In loving and thinking they excel, simply because they live

in a sphere plastic to those powers; but in *doing* —in the capacity of original action—in the whole sphere, in short, of Art—we can give them any amount of odds, and leave them clean out of sight.

When I speak of the influence of ghostly com munications upon "weak-minded persons," I mean persons who, like myself, have been educated in sheerly erroneous views of individual responsibility. After my religious life dawned, my day was turned into hideous and unrelieved night by tacit ghostly visitations. I not merely repented myself, as one of my theological teachers deemed it incumbent on me, of Adam's transgression, but every dubious transaction I had been engaged in from my youth up, no matter how insignificant soever, crept forth from its oblivious slime to paralyze my soul with threats of God's judgment. So paltry an incident of my youth as the throwing snow-balls, and that effectually too, at a younger brother in order to prevent his following me at play, had power, I recollect, to keep me awake all night, bedewing my pillow with tears, and beseeching God to grant me forgiveness. By dint of indefatigable prayer and other ritual observance, I managed indeed to stave off actual despair from the beginning; and juster views of the divine character obtained from the New Testament, gradually illumined my very dense understanding, and gave me comparative peace. But I had no

satisfactory glimpse of the source of all the infernal jugglery I had undergone till I learned from Swedenborg, that it proceeds from certain ghostly busy-bodies intent upon reducing the human mind to their subjection, and availing themselves for this purpose of every sensuous and fallacious idea we entertain of God, and of every disagreeable memory we retain of our own conduct.

I call this information "satisfactory," because it accorded with my own observation. The suffering I underwent confessed itself an infliction, an imposition. I writhed under it as you have seen a beast writhe under a burden too heavy for him to lift, yet not quite heavy enough to crush him out of life. For I could not accept the imputation borne in upon me, that I was really chargeable with the guilt of any of these remembered iniquities. I of course did not deny an external or instrumental connection with them; I did not deny that my *hand* had incurred defilement, but with my total heart and mind I resisted any closer affiliation. In reference, for example, to the trivial incident above specified, even while weeping scalding tears over its remembrance, I could not but be conscious of a present tenderness toward the imaginary sufferer, so cordial and so profuse as totally to acquit my inner or vital self of any complicity in the premises. Hence I had little doubt that the fact might be as Swedenborg alleged, and that I

had been all along nourishing, by means of certain falsities in my intellect, a brood of ghostly loafers who had at last very nearly turned me out of house and home.

It is not uncommon to hear the canting remark, that the world would be better off if men had a little more of the suffering in question. I have no objection to every man understanding the evil of his doings. On the contrary, I wish that every one might clearly discern his habitual iniquities, because until this discernment takes place, we shall not be in haste to put them away from us. But we shall never be able truly to confess them with the heart, *so long as we believe ourselves the source of them*—so long as we believe in our individual responsibility for them. The first step toward my acknowledging the evil of my doings, is my perception of its being a foreign influx or importation. If I view it as indigenous, of course I cannot deem it evil, for you would not have the same soil which brings forth the fruit condemn it also, would you? No man is wiser than himself. How therefore can you expect any one to acknowledge an evil in his conduct, unless you tacitly attribute to him an inward or essential superiority to that evil? If the evil come strictly from himself or within, if it do not proceed merely from defective culture, but grow out of the very substance of his individuality, then you simply insult him by asking him

to repent it, or turn away from it. Would you ask a crab-apple stock to produce peaches, or a bramble-bush to bring forth grapes? Why then stultify yourself by expecting the peaceable fruits of righteousness from those, whom at the same time you teach to regard themselves as the sources of their sin?

I do not read that John the Baptist, who was reckoned a pattern revivalist, ever taught people to get up a spiritual fidget, by way of qualifying themselves for the acknowledgment of the coming divine man. I read that he simply told each man to repent him of, or forsake, the evils incident to his proper vocation, the manifest patent evils which all men recognized and suffered from, and so stand prepared to do the will of the coming teacher. The attempt to fasten the authorship or responsibility of these offences upon the individual soul, and to establish the subject's metaphysical property in them, he left to the bloodhound sagacity of our modern theologians. It may be very grand and lofty in these perfunctory gentlemen to discourse upon the depth of human depravity, and so forth, but I have no hesitation in saying that the man who would really aggravate the self-condemnation of another, or intensify instead of moderate his conviction of personal defilement, no matter on what pretext soever of benevolence, is either himself grossly inexperienced in this horrid

category of suffering, or else, may boast a heart harder than the nether mill-stone. He may have had what he calls troubles of conscience, but they have simply been got up for an occasion, got up with a view to his passing muster with his sect, or boasting an orthodox religious experience. An immense deal of this spiritual dilettantism exists in the world. The mere outside foppery we see in Broadway is as the fragrance of fresh hay in comparison with it.

No one can object to another kindly pointing out any of his discernible evils of life, because every man feels it due to his manhood to rid it of all impediment. But clearly this is a very different thing from the endeavor to affix guilt to the soul. I know nothing so profoundly diabolic as this endeavor, whencesoever it may be exerted, from the pulpit or the closet, and for whatsoever ends, whether conventionally sacred or profane. To aim at making a poor wretch feel, that while simply obeying some dictate of nature, or perhaps some prompting of wounded passion, he has mortally affronted the very source of his life—that he *even has it in his power* to affront it—is a wickedness beside which, it appears to me, most of our burglaries and murders seem common-place and tender. It is *spiritual* murder, murder not of the mere perishing body, but of the imperishable soul. And the man who is guilty of it, should be put to

the penalty of silence for the remainder of his days, or at least until he proves himself better instructed. He very probably has a bosom full of parental tenderness, even while he is making so deadly an assault upon you in the name of his God, and would sooner renounce his own life than cherish a vindictive temper towards his dependent offspring. In which case of course, he is vastly more worshipful than the fetish he serves.

But you say that this man does not leave you hopeless, that even while charging guilt upon you, he points you to the all-sufficient remedy for it. Alas! this apology proceeds upon the notion that a man's relation to God is merely physical or external, and that consequently provided he escapes a literal scourging from the divine hand, his aspirations are satisfied. Let every one speak for himself here. For my part, I am free to say, that I should be far more profoundly horrified by the idea of my *capacity* to offend God—even though I should *never actually do it*—than I should be by a fear of all the literal scourgings possible to be inflicted upon me, by all the self-styled deities of the universe. A deity who has it either in his hand or his heart, to inflict a wound upon any form of sensitive existence, is a deity of decidedly puerile and disreputable pattern. He is no deity for cultivated men and women. A deity whose prestige is chiefly muscular, arising from his imagined

ability to inflict suffering, may still serve the needs of the Bushman, or the Choctaw, or our own rowdies: but to those in whom God's life has dawned however faintly, and whose souls accordingly are evermore consecrated to beauty, he is an unmitigated abomination. For a person of this quality knows no outward relations to God, no such relations as are contemplated or provided for by your mere pugilistic deity. God is his inmost life, without whom in fact he does not live: God is his vital selfhood, without whom indeed he is not himself: to talk therefore of enmity between him and God, is to talk of dividing him asunder, is to talk of separating his form from his substance, his existence from his being.

I distrust accordingly these ghostly busy-bodies, who address our outward ear with gossip of the other world. They first arrest our attention by talk of those we have loved: they gradually inflame our ascetic ambition, our ambition after spiritual distinction: and finally, having got a secure hold, who knows through what pools of voluntary filth and degradation they may drag us? I of course believe that spiritual help is incessantly enjoyed by man, but then it is a help directed exclusively to his affections and thoughts, not to his timorous and servile senses. The spiritual succor which comes in the way of quickening my intellect and affections, I am grateful for. It does not de-

grade me. It aggrandizes me, and makes my life more free. But that which comes in the form of outward and personal dictation, is an insult to my manhood, and in so far as it is tolerated, undermines it. It makes my will servile to a foreign inspiration, discharges my soul of its inherent divinity, and finally leaves me a dismal wreck, high and dry on the sands of superstition. It reduces me in fact below the level of the brute, for the brute has a certain reflected or colonial manhood, which disqualifies him for the tacit endurance of oppression. I am not speaking of impossibilities. We have all heard of tender and devout persons, who having through some foolish asceticism, or other accidental cause, come under the influence of this attenuated despotism, have at last got back to their own firesides, so spent with suffering, so lacerated to the very core, as to be fit—when not aroused to an indignant and manly reaction—only for the soothing shelter of the grave.

On the whole I am led to regard these so-called "spirits," rather as so many vermin revealing themselves in the tumble-down walls of our old theological hostelry, than as any very saintly and sweet persons, whose acquaintance it were edifying or even comfortable to make. I hope their pale activity—their bloodless and ghastly vivacity—may do indirect good by promoting a general disgust for the abject personal gossip which they deal

out to us, and which has so long furnished the staple spiritual commodity of the old theology. But I vehemently discredit the prospect of any positive good. Man's true good never comes from without him, but only from the depths of divinity within him, and whatever tends to divert his attention from this truth, and fix it on Mahommedan paradises, and salvation through electricity, claims his most vindictive anathema. Above all, a spiritual life which feels itself depleted by the diligent prosecution of the natural one, which is actually interested to invade the latter, and persuade good sound flesh and blood to barter its savory cakes and ale for trite and faded sentimentalities, is a life which every reasonable person may safely scout as unworthy his aspiration.

The mere personal gossip these ghostly gents remit to us, proves of what a flimsy and gossamer quality they themselves are, and how feeble a grasp they have yet achieved of life. I am told that a communication was lately received from Tom Paine and Ethan Allen, saying that they were boarding at a hotel kept by John Bunyan, and I can readily fancy the shaking of sides, and the rich asthmatic wheeze, wherewith that communication was launched by the inveterate wags who projected it. But we are also told very seriously, that the Apostle Paul and other distinguished persons, have each a chosen medium in our neigh-

borhood, on whom to dump his particular wisdom, and so establish a depot for that commodity. And I learn besides that Dr. Franklin, Dr. Channing, and several other well-behaved persons, are turning out mere incontinent busy-bodies, and instead of attending to their own affairs, have actually turned round again in the endeavor to instruct and regulate a world, which had previously seen fit to discharge them. Was ever any pretension more intrinsically disorderly and immodest! The apostle Paul in the estimation of all scholars, was a man of great sense and modesty. And the doctors Franklin and Channing were also conspicuous for both traits. Now is it credible for a moment that these great men are turned into such hopeless peacocks by the mere event of death, as to fancy that either of them is capable of exerting the least influence upon human destiny, or the destiny of the least individual? *Credat Judæus, non ego.* Far easier is it for me to believe, that certain spectral Slenders and Shallows have been donning the dress of these good men, as found folded up and ticketed on the shelves of somebody's reverential memory, and vainly trying in that guise to ape also the illustrious manners which once sanctified it.

I am persuaded that this entire hobgoblin demonstration owes its existence to the superstitious and semi-Pagan conceptions of spiritual existence

which overrun society, and which are diligently nurtured by the old theology. The old theology represents the spiritual world as remote from the natural one *in space.* It supposes that when men die, they actually traverse space, actually *go* somewhere, and bring up either at a certain fixed *locale* within the realm of sense, constituting heaven, or at another fixed *locale* constituting hell. Books even are written to suggest the probable latitude of these places, whether within or without our solar system, and so forth. But this is clearly puerile. The spiritual world does not fall within time and space. Time and space simply express two most general laws or methods by which the sensuous understanding, or the intelligence enlightened only by the senses, apprehends spiritual existence, or gathers knowledge. Thus, man, being a creature of infinite love and wisdom, is spiritually or in his most intimate self, a form of affection and intellect. But intellect and affection are purely subjective existences: they are not *things*, visible to sense: they are forms of life. Hence unless some plane exist, in which these forms may be mirrored, and in which at the same time, man's faculty may be organized to discern them, he must forever remain unconscious of himself, devoid of conscious life. He must in fact remain forever blent with Deity, or infinitude, and therefore dead to all that stupendous epic of passion, intellect,

and action, which constitutes his present history, and which is based exclusively upon his finite natural experience.

For nature furnishes this necessary plane, and its two universal laws, the one named time, serving sharply to discriminate to our perception event from event, and the other named space, serving sharply to discriminate to our perception form from form, supply us with the fixed alphabet of all knowledge. Accordingly whatsoever is in space and time, whatsoever falls within the realm of sense and fills the page of history, is purely phenomenal. It is not being, but only the appearance of being to a limited intelligence, an intelligence limited by the senses. Hence the sacredest incidents of history are not essential facts of humanity, but representative facts, facts which merely symbolize infinite and eternal verities, or verities which utterly disclaim space and time. My true being, the being of every man, is God, or infinite goodness and truth. Now infinite goodness and truth though they reveal themselves to a finite appreciation under the forms of time and space, under sensible forms, yet are not themselves sensible forms, but spiritual forms, which quite transcend time and space. Consequently my being, my essential selfhood, is always independent of space and time, and when I die therefore or become invisible to sense, the event is purely circumferential and does not

affect my central quality. That remains as immutable as God, because it is God, and is consequently in no danger of being compromised by any event of my outer or sensible experience. All these events do but image or bring to my own consciousness, the wonders of divinity which are shut up within me and in all men. And the event of death itself is only more signal than other events, because it makes this thrilling imagery more near and miraculous, by opening my consciousness to an inner field of being, in which time and space are no longer fixed but plastic to the affections of the individual, or in which every outward event and every outward form are visibly born of the subject's private selfhood, and not as here of his common nature.

If all this be true, and it can only be gainsaid through a denial of the divine infinitude, it is manifest that the old theology acts a very childish and superstitious part, in the personal idolatries which it organizes, in the attitude of literal dependence which it places man under to some mere phenomenon or appearance of man, in the same plane with himself. The life of Jesus and of Paul have exerted, and do still doubtless exert, a great influence upon human history, upon man in nature. That is to say, I am indebted to their superb humanitary services for vastly improved relations to my fellow-man, for greatly mitigated social circum-

stances. But to say that either Jesus or Paul, or all the holiest names in history, have the slightest power directly to affect my spiritual relations, my relations to my inmost or essential self, or to God, is to utter a sheer absurdity. It is simply in effect to make the finite dominate the infinite, of which it is itself the helpless shadow; it is to make the dead form or appearance control the living substance upon which it is strictly dependent for existence. Of course intelligent men grow out of these carnal bonds, sometime or other, and it is not worth while to lament for their sake therefore. But take persons of less intelligence, simple, credulous men, and teach them that Jesus, or Paul, or any other tangible person, has an *absolute* claim to their respect, an absolute claim to their personal allegiance; and then let them come, through a similar *hocus-pocus* to that of the "spiritual rappings," into sensible contact with certain unscrupulous knaves in the world of spirits, who for some private end shall see fit to represent themselves as these sacred persons, and *exploit* their honest credulity: who can tell to what horrid issues the superstition may lead? We hear just now enough to make the most indifferent feel: who can tell, if the insanity grow, to what deplorable heights it may *eventually* reach?

INTEMPERANCE.

THE name of Hartley Coleridge, obscure before, is likely to be embalmed in a wide-spread notoriety, not more by reason of certain exquisite traits brought to light in his recent biography, than by the great infirmity which made them so unavailing to his happiness.

With the choicest gifts of heart and mind, Hartley Coleridge was a drunkard. But they who deplored his infirmity lost none of their regard for the man. On the contrary, the attractive features of his character appear to have been only the more clearly illustrated by this dark background of vicious habit. The case is not rare. A parallel and signal instance is within the memory of all our citizens. Every one remembers the late Mr. ——, a man of the most massive mental endowments, and the richest natural affections, who trod without effort heights which great men toiled all

their lives to reach, and who shed lustre upon every position, social or political, he ever occupied, and yet fell a victim to the same destroyer. But the jeweled nature of this man never shone so bright in the eyes of his friends, as when they saw the dark cloud up-rolling which was soon to snatch it from mortal sight for evermore. Whether it was that he felt the stimulus of the great admiration he excited, or that his angels were resolved to show how divine a structure was imperiled by so base a worm, certain it is that his powers seemed only to culminate at the very eve of their final eclipse. Both heart and mind appeared unabated, and even untarnished. Reasoning, imagination, wit, and a diction which in every case fitted his thought as the skin fits the body, in short all his powers, were in lively play, and nothing was lacking to ensure him the proudest intellectual prestige in the nation, save strength of will to defy the obscene appetite which consumed his vitals. But he fell prone, and the pitying earth made haste to hide him, forlorn and broken-hearted, from the stolid gaze of men.

Now what I wish to say in regard to these and like cases, is that they are a clinging and a burning reproach to the society that tolerates them. Society has ample virtue to cure every instance of intemperance within her limits, provided she had only the will to exert it. There is no mystery about drunkenness. *Like all habits, its strength lies*

in a diseased will. I have been in the habit of saying "good morning" to my mother when we meet at breakfast. If I set myself seriously to forego this salutation of a morning, I find the task superior to my powers. All my spiritual forces appear on the point of deserting me, and my thoughts become a complete chaos. This experience upon so trivial an occasion, arises from the feebleness of my will or practical faculty. The bent of my nature is towards affection and thought rather than action. I love the fireside rather than the forum. I can give extatic hours to worship or meditation, but moments spent in original deeds, such as putting a button upon my coat or cleansing my garden-walk of weeds, weigh very heavily upon my shoulders. Habit, therefore, is my tyrant. What I have been accustomed to do I do easily, nor can I forego the doing of it without extreme pain. My will, or practical faculty, being so small, I can scarcely do anything else but what I have been accustomed to do all my life. My habits since I gave up tobacco, after perhaps a ten years' conflict, are what are called good. But all habit is bad *per se.* It is at best but a substitute for original and manly action. The habit of prayer and of going to church bear certainly very innocent social fruit. But as *habits* they involve no less damage to the soul's health, which consists in the faculty of prompt and original action—action suited to every

day's emergency, than others of whatever conventional odium.

Now drunkenness is the vice of natures like mine. It is the besetting temptation of all those whose passive side is more developed than their practical one, or whose energies of passion and thought are superior to their energy of action. One reason of this is obvious from what has gone before, namely, that persons of this sort invariably incline to *habitual* action, of whatever kind, by the necessity of their nature. And another is, that wine, by the imaginative exhilaration it produces, simulates for the subject the very power which his sober consciousness tells him he is deficient in. When I take a few glasses of wine I am ready to measure strategy with Bonaparte, and though normally unambitious in the presence of woman, would not hesitate to encounter Antony in rivalry for Cleopatra. The man of action, or practical man, on the other hand, is ashamed of these cheap and impalpable conquests. He knows by experience the amount of his power, and is not willingly duped into confounding his performance with the exuberant impulse and aspiration which lie behind it. Hence you never, or very rarely, see eminently practical people overcome by this habit. Its victims are commonly amiable, affectionate, intellectual persons, men of whom it is allowable to say that "they have no enemy but themselves." Peo-

ple who can act afresh every morning endure no habits, least of all harmful ones. It is even frightful to see how a Yankee (who is a type of practicality or will, and therefore deficient in the subsoil of tenderness and mental refinement) staves ahead, sleeping every night a thousand miles apart, dining at noon or dusk indifferently, at home in every tavern, and the frankest friend of every man he has known for the last half hour. Did you ever see a Yankee, pure grit, who could not invent a tolerable meal out of any dish set before him? Or is there in the land a bed out of which he could not coax a remunerative sleep? The Yankee "without guile" heralds a new and lustrous era for humanity. It is the pure earthly or external principle (symbolically the devil) becoming utilized and at length respectable. Hence the reputed "omnipotence" of the Yankee. For there is nothing so powerful as the external or infernal principle in *unison* with the internal one. Hence we read that "there is more joy in heaven over *one* repentant *sinner* than over *ninety and nine just persons* who need no repentance."

Such being the philosophy of Intemperance, it is manifest that society acts very stupidly in treating it with simple malediction. What it wants is medication, not malediction. It is a symptom of disease in the subject; and what he invites from you accordingly is not scorn, but sympathy and

help. The disease is an inherited or natural weakness of will, and is quite as curable under proper care as any more material form of disease. How stupid to preach to the drunkard upon the evils of intemperance! Has he not an infinitely keener sense of these in his little finger than you have in your whole complacent and noisy noddle? Is not his habit a daily and dismal hell to him? And can you aspire to no manlier office than stirring up its coals? Nothing is more common for thoughtless people than to confound the *will* or practical ability of a person, with his *wishes* or spiritual desires and aspirations. And hence it is inferred that because the drunkard *will not* reform, he *does not wish to.* No foolisher fallacy exists than this. The drunkard never lived who, in the very sabbath of his delirium, would not have given his right hand to be able to drink no more. What he asks from you therefore is, not that you should inflame his good aspirations, which if the truth were known are in a good deal livelier exercise than your own, but simply that you should, by the potent magnetism of your sympathy, empower or inflame his will.

The drunkard's disease being one of his voluntary or practical faculty, of course the cure of it can only come through himself. That is to say, it can only come about through the development in him of a will superior to that of his natural or

inherited one. The means of this development are exclusively social. The first step, which is the vitally important one, consists in Society coming to regard drunkenness as nothing more or less than a symptom of disease, and ceasing consequently to regard the subject as criminal on account of it. This step on the part of Society would be tantamount to the inward justification of the sufferer, and would be immediately followed on his side by a sense of peace and a feeling of unity with Society, so novel and delicious as of itself almost to suffice for his complete enlargement. Only they love much to whom much is forgiven. And when Society shall have the grace to forgive all her erring offspring, by assuming to herself the burden of their offences, she will learn that the path of magnanimity is also the path of consummate prudence. Teach a man to believe himself at heart a sinner, and he will be sure to "play hell," as the phrase goes, with his teachers. Teach him, on the contrary, to believe himself at heart sound, and a sinner only by social imputation, and he will abound in all manner of manly fruit. Accordingly this poor drunkard, being inwardly relieved of that guilt which bows him to the dust, and which forever darkens the hope of the future by the memory of the loathsome past; being restored to more than pristine peace and innocence by your loyalty to truth, will put on vigor and beauty with the day,

and shed the slough of natural habit as spontaneously as flowers shed their foliage, or corn its husks.

A hospital or infirmary for intemperance, organized and animated by this spirit, is a desideratum upon which much might be said, and I have heard of one being opened somewhere on Long Island, but I have no authentic information about it.

CHRISTIANITY.

MAN cannot be made truly orderly by outward constraint, but only by inward attraction, or what is the same thing, the free play of the affections. Constrained order is that which we impose upon the beasts when we would reduce them to subjection. We bit the mouth of the horse, and freely apply the goad to the sides of the ox. But we have no respect for a man who requires similar persuasives to order. So long as he cannot be kept orderly save by the fear of punishment in this world or the next, we feel that he is a very immature style of man, and pray accordingly for his incontinent ripening. For the only order which is seemly for man, is that which is energized from within, that which taking being from his affections, and form from his intelligence, issues in every beautiful and gracious word and action. For example, suppose a man to stand very much in

the way of some cherished interest of mine; or suppose him to have injured me by some interference with my affairs; it is quite possible that the lust of gain in the one case, or of revenge in the other, may prompt me to remove the offender from my path. Now while I resist this temptation only through fear of punishment here or hereafter, and not from cordial disgust or distaste, it is evident that I am as yet inwardly immature or unripe; and that those essential divine juices which shall one day fill me with sweetness are still acid and acrid. In short, it is evident that I have not yet received that spiritual anointing from the Highest or Inmost, which constitutes the vital distinction of humanity, and enables it in good old ecclesiastical phrase, to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

People commonly suppose that this maturity of humanity is not destined to take place on earth, that it is contingent upon a certain change of place to be brought about by death. Regeneration is with them a mechanical process, effected by some operation of God considered as a quite external being or life. They have no idea that man is vitalized from within, that the procession of life is always from within to without,—although many of their most cherished traditions imply the truth—and that wherever man is accordingly, there is God in the plenitude of His power.

Hence they turn man's advancement, in any real sense of the word, into an exclusively ultra-mundane achievement, when the decease of the natural body shall have left the soul more pliant to the divine behests. But this is a fallacy. The regenerative process is purely dynamical, and consists in the removal of certain spiritual impediments to the perfect life in the shape of puerile prejudices and traditional falsities. Nature, or the material world, is spiritually servile or passive, and has not the slightest power therefore to impede any possible development of human destiny, were man only true to himself. Man has simply to place himself in the true order of his life, which requires that his conduct be always begotten of an inward instead of an outward motive, be begotten of taste instead of prudence or policy, to realize at once the most liberal measure of the divine benignity, not only in a spiritual way, or the way of a delicious bosom serenity, but also in a material way, the way of an unprecedentedly ample fructification of nature.

Evil is always superficial, and of its very nature therefore perishable or transitory. It is unknown at the heart of things, and when therefore the heart of things becomes fully operative at the extremities, or when the centre governs the circumference, it will utterly die out of remembrance. "There was once," says a famous mystic, "a numerous

and somewhat disorderly crowd of spirits about me, who complained, saying that now a total destruction was at hand, since nothing appeared in fellowship among them. But *in the midst of them I perceived a soft sound, angelically sweet, in the which was nothing but what was orderly.* These angelic choirs were *within*, and the crowd of spirits to whom appertained what was disorderly were *without.* The angelic flowing strain continued a long time, and it was said that hereby was represented how the Lord rules things confused and disorderly which are upon the surface, *by virtue of a pacific principle in the midst or within*, whereby the disorderly things in the circumference are reduced into order, each being restored from the error of its way." Just so is it in this natural sphere of human existence. To us the actors in it, all things have worn a tumultuous and disorderly appearance, and we have supposed that such was also the reality. But in the very heart of all this turbulence dwells the serene and steadfast presence of God, unconscious of the noise that fills our ear, because he is conscious only of the harmony out of whose very perfection it springs. The divine or "pacific" principle in the midst of our turbulent moral history, the principle which originates and controls all its seeming turbulence, is the spiritual destiny of man, is the sleepless effort of Deity to develope in man the consciousness of His own inseparable

presence and perfection, and to endow Him with the lordship of the outward universe. This is the great inward meaning of Christianity, the which, when its purely literal and deciduous features shall have found their proper or subordinate place, shall give it power over all the religions of the earth, and make it a standard or rallying point of all the nations now grovelling in superstition.

Other religions have very much more to say of prayer, and asceticism, and worship, and sacred writings, and of life beyond the grave, than Christianity has, at least the Christianity of the four gospels. Christ, indeed, commends the profusest prayer, not by any means as a condition of obtaining the divine favor otherwise unobtainable, but only with a view to set forth the unsuspected amplitude of the divine bounty. If any of you, said he, know how to gratify the desires of your children, when addressed to you, *how much more* shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask of Him. And whatsoever ritualities he prescribed, were prescribed not as instrumental to any end properly speaking, not as means of achieving a salvation otherwise withheld, but only as instructive and beautiful memorials of a salvation more free and full for all men than science had yet begun to lisp or even dream of.

But all this is the smallest praise attributable to Christianity, and does not begin to express its dis-

tinctive trait. What distinguishes Christianity from all other religions, is that it lays hold not merely of the life to come but of that which now is; that it promises not merely a future but also a present salvation. Its *peculiar* glory is that it absolves its disciple from any obligation, "either to ascend into heaven or to descend into the earth," in order to realize its benefits; that it teaches him to pray and labor not for his private soul's salvation in other worlds—worlds beyond the grave—but only that God's name might be hallowed and His kingdom come and His will be done *in this present world*, just as it is done in heaven. It teaches him to pray that God would give him *this passing day* the supply of every want and a deliverance from all temptation and evil. And the motive by which it wings the petition is simply this, that there is no power in the universe but God's: or in other words that His alone is the kingdom of the earth, His alone the power of administering it, and His alone the glory of doing so.

This we repeat is the grand distinction of Christianity from all other religions, that it aims to turn the kingdoms of this world into the kingdoms of God. It may be said that Mahommedanism also claims the empire of the earth for God. Yes, but a mere material empire founded on the natural antipathy of races, rather than a spiritual one founded on their scientific harmony. Accord-

ingly, if you look at the practical operation of the two economies, you find the mind of man in Christendom continually advancing, continually rising above the dominion of the senses, while in Mahommedan countries it remains a stagnant and fetid pool unruffled by any divine afflatus. Mahommedanism and all Gentile religions swamp man in nature, in the mere mud of his natural relations. Christianity lifts him out of these relations, and allies him in spirit with universal goodness and truth. In all the lower religions the claims of kindred and country are paramount, the religion being practically nothing more than a consecration of the ties of nature. Christianity on the other hand, as is very well known, aims at bringing to light supernatural or divine ties for man, and the Christ openly promised all those who forsook their natural relationships for his sake, not merely the greatest possible spiritual, but even the greatest possible temporal compensations also.

If now we should be asked in what way the elevation which Christianity promised to man on earth was destined to be accomplished, we should reply, taking our cue from history, by the serene and resistless march of science. It is science alone which is capable of working the spiritual enfranchisement of man, or of giving him deliverance from the bondage of his merely natural necessities.

Certain grandiose and pivotal men appear, doubtless, at great historic intervals, who, by the simple might of suffering, achieve their private emancipation, slowly weaving the royal purple, in fact, out of their own quivering flesh and blood. All honor to these men in their place! They are the stout soldiers of God who have held at bay the forces of nature, until the domain of man's individuality might become scientifically explored and established. But warfare is not the end of existence, but only a means of establishing peace on indestructible foundations. Hence, the soldier exists not for his own sake, but only for the sake of the citizen. He is the tool or servant of the citizen, and the moment he attempts to act for himself, or apart from that honorable service, they strip him of his glittering livery, and rattle him off to a felonious death. Thus we may gratefully admire those stout old saints and ascetics, who fought that we might reap the fruits of peace, but surely it would be insane to emulate them. This would be to say that they had not achieved their mission, that the conquest they were empowered to make for humanity remained forever unaccomplished. Besides, the fiery ordeal these great spirits endured is totally disproportionate to the sinews of our ordinary spirituality. And consequently unless there be a gentler path opened to the mass—a path through the valley as well as over the hill, a path

which shall never desert the cheerful hum of industry, nor be lost to the smoke of the peaceful cottage, but ever resound with the bells of cattle returning at eventide, and the footsteps of childhood reeling with glee, and the voice of blissful lovers whispering eternal constancy—why then the mass of mankind must despair of salvation. In that case God would be able to save only great men, and the humble, or those who could yield Him no assistance, must tumble off to destruction. Fie on so base a thought!

Now it is science which lays out this secure and serene path, this sweet valley-road which leads to the assured and universal lordship of nature. Science, which is the harvested fruit of universal experience and observation, absolves our private sinews from every obligation to subjugate nature, by demonstrating a certain essential accord between nature and spirit, which, if organized in suitable institutions, will operate a complete harmony between the inward and outward spheres of human life, or what is the same thing, between the public and private interests of man. Thus, science fulfils the identical prophecy of all religion. For as all religion, one jot removed from grovelling superstition, contemplates nothing more at its highest culmination than the unity of man with God and his fellow-man, so Science, in commending to man's reverence the laws of this complex

unity—laws depending upon no convention, and enforced by nothing but their own superb and matchless reason—perfectly enables him for the first time to meet the requirements of religion.

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